

John *Vindiciae Pietatis*

~~AND~~ OR, ~~AND~~

A VINDICATION OF GODLINESS,

In the greatest Strictness and Spirituality of it,
FROM THE
IMPUTATIONS
OF

FOLLY and FANCY.

Together with
Several Directions for the Attaini^{ng} and
Maintaining of a Godly Life.

By *Rich^d. Alleine.*

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Ellin Sutton
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To my dearly Beloved in Christ, the Inhabitants of the Parish of B. in the County of S.

My dearly beloved Brethren,

THE ensuing Sermons, as they had their Birth for your sakes, so are they now offered into your hands; and they come unto you, upon the same important errand upon which their Author hath been sent among you, *viz.* to shew the path of Life, and to bring you into, and establish you in that holy state and way that leads to everlasting Blessedness.

The chief hindrances of Sinners eternal Happiness (next to that innate enmity against God and Godliness, which is rooted in their hearts) are, their prejudices against, and their ignorance of the good ways of the Lord.

Satan and his Instruments have made it their business, by those Vellies of reproaches and unreasonable calumnies, which they are continually discharging against holiness, to render it in the judgment of the world, an empty and contemptible thing.

Two things there are, amongst many others, which they lay to the reproach of it. The one, that it is Folly; whatever there may be in this Godliness, yet it is attended with so many difficulties, dangers, and hazards, and will be such an unsufferable prejudice to all that will have much

The Epistle Dedicatory.

to do with it, that 'tis a foolish thing, upon such hazards and disadvantages to adventure upon it. If this will not do, but the consciences of men, whilst they apprehend the real worth and excellencie of it, stand convinced, that it is not folly, but wisdom, to adventure on any difficulties, to run any hazards for so glorious a prize; then comes in the second reproach, That it is but a device, a specious contrivance, to take up eager heads, to amuse and divert the busie, and keep in awe weak souls, when if it be enquired into, notwithstanding its glorious pretences, it will be found nothing else but imagination, meer fanisie, and no reality at all in the heart of it.

These impressions I have endeavoured, according to my might, to wipe away from your hearts, and the hearts of such as read, what you have heard, in the ensuing discourses; where I hope, you will see, both sufficient reason whence to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, to establish your hearts in the firm belief, and resolved embracing of it, and abundant encouragement to hold on your holy course to the end.

The other hindrance of a godly life is mens ignorance: they walk not in the way of the Lord, because they know not the way of the Lord: some rude and dark notions of Religion possibly they may have, but wherein the Spirit and Life of Godliness stands, and how to set upon an holy and heavenly course they cannot tell. This hindrance

The Epistle Dedicatory.

drance I have in part prevented in that description I have given of a godly man, and more fully removed in those Directions which I have subjoyned, for the obtaining and carrying on a godly life.

Brethren, my hearts desire and prayer for you is, that what I have done, may be successful to your souls: *that you may be saved*, as the Apostle speaks, that you may be brought into, and established in the way of Truth, and may be found walking in the way of Righteousness. And if the Lord shall be pleased so to follow these my endeavours with his blessing, that they may contribute any thing to this end; If the Lord shall so animate these (otherwise) dead words, by his quickning Spirit, that any souls of them that are without, may be added to the Church, that any cubits may be added to the stature of those that are within, it shall be a Crown to me, and exceeding cause of rejoycing. Let the Lord Almighty have the praise for ever, as from all such who shall reap any benefit hereby, go from the soul of

Your Servant

in the Gospel,

R. A.

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Ephes.

Ephel. 5. 15.

See then that ye walk *Circumspectly*, not as Fools, but as Wise.

IN the first verse of this Chapter, the Apostle exhorts to the whole duty of Christians, *Be ye followers of God*: the same Exhortation he gives in other terms, *verse 8. Walk as Children of Light*: both which Exhortations are comprehensive in the whole duty of Christians.

In the following verses, he gives particular Rules and Directions, respecting the particular duties of Religion.

1. Walk in Love, *ver. 2.*
2. Flee all Iniquity, both 1. Greater Iniquities, Fornication, and all Uncleanness, or Covetousness.
2. Smaller Iniquities; 1. The evils of the tongue; neither filthiness, that is, filthy talking, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient. Not only evil works, but evil words; not only an unclean conversation, but corrupt communication, is uncomely in the Saints.
3. Partaking in other mens sins, *ver. 7.* which he further dehorts from *ver. 11.* charging them, 1. To have no *communion* with them. Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness: 2. To be guilty of no *connivance* at them, but rather reprove them.

Of these strict Rules in the Text, he presses the strict observation; see that ye walk *circumspectly* with an eye to every duty, to every direction; not only the greater and more weighty duties of Religion, but the lesser and smaller parts of it, even to all that the Lord requires.

In the words you may observe,

1. A strict charge; *See*, or look diligently and carefully to it.

2. The

2. The matter given in charge, *Walk Circumspectly*, which some render, *Walk warily*, others, *accurately*, *exactly*; others, *Walk precisely*; and that a learned Critick affirms the word *ἀκριβῶς* most properly signifies, *precisely*.

3. A commendation of this circumspect walking: *This is wise walking, not as fools, but as wise*: Intimating, that to walk loosely, is to walk toolishly; to walk circumspectly, is to walk wisely, as men of wisdom.

The observations from these words, are chiefly these two:

Doctr. 1. Christians must be Precisians.

2. Precisians are no fools; or, Christians of an exact and circumspect life, are, what ever the world accounts of them, truly wise men: This latter observation is it that I intend to insist upon.

Beloved, I am entring upon a discourse of a sort of people, of whom we may say, with those Jews, *Act. 28: 22. Concerning this Sect, we know that it is every where spoken against*; And, with the Apostles, *1 Cor. 4. 9. are made a spectacle to the World, and to Angels, and to Men*; concerning whom Heaven and Earth are divided, and the world is divided within it self: Of whom, God says, *The world is not worthy*; of whom the world sayes, they are not *worthy to live*; of whom God sayes, they are the *Apple of mine eye*; of whom the World sayes they are a *sore in our eye*; whom God accounts his *Jewels*, whom men account the *filth of the World*, and the *off-scouring of all things*: Of whom God sayes, they are the *Sons of Wisdom*, but men say they are *Fools*. And, as God and men are thus divided, so are men no less divided amongst themselves. Some few say concerning these, as they concerning Christ, *They are good men*: Others say, *No, but they are deceivers of the people*. A Precisian, with the most, is grown into a Proverb of Re-

Preach

proach, a mark of Infamy. To be a Drunkard, a Fornicator, a Swearer, is no reproach, in comparison of being noted for a Puritan.

Well, but let us enquire a little more narrowly into the way and manner of this sort of people, about whom the world is thus moved, and hath been in all ages.

In order hereunto I shall shew you,

First, What a Precisian is ; and Secondly, prove to you against all the world, that he is no Fool, but a truly, yea, the only wise ; which if I do not, through the help of God, make evident to the Consciences of impartial and unprejudiced persons, let me pass for a deceiver.

Touching the former, What a Precisian is, a Scripture-Precisian. Let me first tell you, to prevent mistakes, who he is not.

1. Not a *Pharisee*, a painted Sepulchre, whose Religion is a meer shew, who hath the form of godliness without the Power ; who is pure in his own eyes, and yet not cleansed from his filthiness ; who is exact about the punctilio's of Religion, and hath a great zeal about the *Minima Legis*, the lower and more circumstantial matters, and neglects the weightier things of the Law : this is not he.

2. Not a *Phanatick*, properly so called (though that be a Vizard put upon him by some, as the hides of Beasts were put upon the Christians of old) not a *Phanatick*, I say, whose Religion is all Fancy, Imagination, Enthusiasms, the dreams and visions of his own heart : Neither is this he. Christianity is not a Castle in the air, but is a building that hath Foundation.

3. Not a *Phrenetick* (no son of violence or contention,) who not knowing what spirit he is of, calls for fire from Heaven to set all in combustion, if every thing be not exactly fashioned according to his own mind. Neither

ther is this he. *The Wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, the servants of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle, &c.*

By a Precisian, I mean a sincere circumspect Christian, one whose care and endeavour is, *To walk uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel*, who withdrawing himself from the fellowship, fashions, and lusts of the world, and denying himself the sinful liberties thereof, doth exercise himself to keep a good conscience towards God and men. This is the person against whom the great hate and envy, and severe censures and calumnies of ungodly men are chiefly intended, under what colour or disguise soever they are carried; the enmity is not betwixt Sinners and Hypocrites, but betwixt Sinners and Saints, the seed of the Serpent, and the seed of the Woman; not the pretended, but the true seed; *Israelites* indeed, are the men whom the *Ishmaelites* persecute: Gal. 4. 29. *He that was born after the flesh, persecuted him, not that pretended to be, but was born after the Spirit.* Of this person, or of this sort of people, I shall give you a more full description in these two particulars;

1. By their make or Constitution.

2. By their Way, or Conversation.

I. By their Constitution, they are made and cut out exactly according to the pattern; they are born of the Spirit, born of God, they bare the express image of their Father upon them: Col. 3. 10. *Renewed after the Image of him that created him*; they are of a new Make from what they were, there is a mighty change wrought in and upon them, 2 Cor. 3. 18. *Metamorphousa*; *We are changed into the same Image.* In our first birth, we were brought forth in the Image of our first Father, Gen. 5. 3. *Adam begat a Son in his own Image*; that is, a fleshly and earthly Image. The first man was of the earth, earthly, and such are all his natural Progeny, an
earthly

earthly generation; he that is born of the Spirit, is brought forth in a spiritual frame, *John 3.6. That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.* He that is born from above, is of an heavenly Nature, as well as Original. The change that Religion makes on men, is not such a low and inconsiderable thing as some men make it, standing only in some little reformation of the life, but it consists chiefly in the renewing of the soul after the Image of God, the forming of Christ upon the heart, or Inner man. As that second change, which shall be at the Resurrection, will be the transforming of our vile bodies, into the likeness of Christs glorious body; so this first change is a transforming of our vile souls into the likeness of his glorious Spirit. Christians are the Temples of the Lord, and as *Moses* made the Tabernacle exactly according to the pattern shewed in the Mount, so these spiritual Temples are made as exactly according to their pattern, *2 Cor. 3. 3. They are the Epistles of Christ; written not with Ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in Tables of stone, but in fleshy Tables of the heart.* Carnal men plead hard for their Christianity; they are all Christians, all Disciples, all the people of God, though they be Ignorant, Unbelieving, Earthly, Sensual, yet some kind of Profession (such as it is) there is amongst them; a profession of Faith, a profession of Repentance, which, though it amount to little more then bare (*saying*) I believe, I repent, I am sorry for my sins, yet this must pass for Christianity. But (as Christ once said to the tempting Jews) *whose is this Image and Superscription?* Where is the divine stamp and impress? Where is your likeness to Christ? Is there not still the Visage of the Old man? Is there not the old Pride, the old Envy, the old Enmity against Holiness, the old Guile, and Falshood, and Lust still spread over you? Is this the Image of Christ? Christians that are truly such,

are precisely formed according to this pattern; they have face for face, limb for limb, grace for grace; all the grace that is in Christ, is truly, though not yet, perfectly copied out upon them; though the characters may be something blotted and obscured, by reason of the remainders of corruption, yet there they are; the same mind, the same heart, that was in Christ is in them. A true Christian is a Transcript of Christ: *As he is, so are we in the world.*

This inward change, this forming of Christ upon the heart, is the very soul and life of Christianity. You may as well call him a *Man*, whose soul is not in him, as you may call him a *Christian*, who hath not the Spirit of Christ in him. Let no man count himself a Christian from any outward priviledges, much less from any outward *Paint* of Christianity, but from the inward *Prints* of it upon his heart. Thou hopest thou art a Christian, but where is the Image and superscription of Christ upon thy heart? Dost thou not find, not only an unlikeness to Christ, but a dislike of Christ, an inward loathing of the holiness of Christ, and a rising of heart against the strictness of that holy life which he requires? Dost thou not find a savour of earthliness and fleshliness bearing the sway and rule in thine heart? Dost thou not find principles tending altogether to looseness and licentiousness? Is this thy likeness to Christ? Dost thou not find an emptiness of the Light, Life, Love, Grace of Christ in thy soul? Whatever thou hast of Christ without, thou hast nothing of Christ within. Deceive not thy self, God is a Spirit, and his eye is first upon the spirits and souls of men; he loves truth in the inward parts, he loves holiness in the inward parts: *He is a Jew which is one inwardly*, and he is a Christian which is one inwardly. He is not a Christian, who is only outwardly so. Nay further, as he is not a Christian, which is not inwardly so,

so, so neither he that hath something of the inwards of a Christian, and hath not radically all the graces of Christ in him; he that hath faith, and hath not charity; he that hath the light of a Christian, and not the love; he that hath the desires of a Christian, and not the Conscience of a Christian; he that wants any one of the vital parts of Christianity, hath nothing at all; a thorow Christian is throughout conform to the pattern. And thus you have a description of Scripture Precisians by their Make or Constitution.

II. I shall describe them by their Conversation,

and that { 1. By the end of their Conversation.

{ 2. By their Course or Motion to this end.

1. By the end of their Conversation: What is it that these men would have, or whither are they bound? They cannot be content to go along with their Neighbours, to live and do as others: whither is it that they are going, or what is it that they would have! Why this is it, they are travelling Heaven-ward, trading to another Country, they are bound for the Holy Land, for the Holy City, they are going towards *Sion* or *Jerusalem*, which is above, *Jer. 30. 5. They shall ask the way to Sion with their faces thitherward. Sion* was the ancient seat of Gods Residence among his people, the place of Gods solemn service, wherein he was wont to meet his people, and appear unto them. This *Sion* which was here below, the place of Gods *gracious presence*, was a type of that *Sion* which is above, *Heaven*, the place of Gods *glorious presence*; this sort of people are travelling Heavenward, they are those *strangers* and *pilgrims* here on Earth, mentioned, *Heb. 11. 13, 14. That are seeking a Country*, not an earthly, but an heavenly Country, as it is there exprest. There are two things in the forementioned Text, that discover whither they are travelling.

1. The enquiry they make. You may guess whither a Traveller is going, when you hear him ask diligently the way to such or such a place, *They shall ask the way to Sion.* 2. Their setting their faces thitherward, *They shall ask, &c. with their faces thitherward.* Their setting their faces towards *Sion*, notes two things. 1. Their *looking wisely* towards it. A Travellers eye is much towards his Journeys end; Christians that are making Heavenward, are much and often looking Heavenward; a Christians heart is in his eye, and his eye is on his home. 2. Their setting their faces thither, notes the bending of their course thitherward. 'Twas said of Christ, *Luke 9.51. He set his face to go to Jerusalem.* Christians set their faces Heavenward, and thither they bend their course: They are much in asking the way, *What must I do to be saved? who shall ascend into the holy Hill? What manner of persons must we be, that we may get thither? and they take the way that leads thither.*

And this is a further Description of this sort of people, they are men for another Country, men for another World: they are born from above, and they seek things above; they are risen with Christ, and they are ascending unto Christ; their treasure is above, their hopes are above, and thither are they hastening; whatsoever they have of this Worlds goods for the support of their life, yet these things are not the scope and end of their life: They seek that glory, honour, and immortality which comes from God, and they are going on from strength to strength, till they come and appear before God in *Sion*. And herein lies a special difference betwixt them and all others whatsoever: worldly men are men of this world, for a worldly happiness, for a worldly Heaven, and Heaven on earth; or if they have any thoughts or hopes of another Heaven, yet they think not so much of it as to ask the way thither. How seldom do we

we hear any such question put by them, *What must I do to be saved?* What must I do to be rich? Which is the way to honour and temporal preferment? Or how may I escape trouble, and save my self harmless? These inquiries, and such like, are ordinarily in their hearts and mouths; but such a serious question as this, *What must I do to be saved?* comes so seldom from any of them, that 'tis a wonder how the Devil with all his skill can make them once believe or hope that ever they shall attain to that salvation: or if they do ask the way to Heaven, yet it is not with their faces, but with their backs thitherward: whatever little talk there may fall in sometimes about souls and eternal salvation, yet their faces are set another way, they bend their course to *Egypt* and *Sodom*, towards their wealth or their wickedness. Hearken, O ye foolish worldlings, you say, every one of you, you hope for salvation, but which way are your faces set? whither are you going? Is that way of Swearing, Lying, and Lust, and carnal Liberty, and Covetousness, and Sensuality, to which you give up your selves. is this the way of Life? In this a sincere Christian is differenced from all others in the world, he fixes his heart, and his hope, and aims, upon an eternal happiness, and he bends his course towards the obtaining of it.

2. By their course or motion towards this end. And here I shall give you a threefold description of them:

1. *They are such as walk in a right way.*
2. *They are upright and exact in the way.*
3. *From this way they will not be turned aside by any flatteries of the world on one hand, or frowns on the other.*

I They are such as walk in the right way, which is called sometimes, *The way of the Lord*, sometimes, *the way of Truth*, sometimes, *the way of Righteousness*, sometimes, *the way of Life*, Psal. 119. 2 Psal. 116. 1. They understand

derstand which is the right way by these three pair of Way-marks.

1. *The Old and good Way.*
2. *The New and Living Way.*
3. *The Strait and narrow Way.*

First, *The Old and good Way*, that is the *right way*, that is the way they are commanded to enquire after and take, Jer. 6. 26. *Stand ye in the wayes, and see, ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein. Stand ye in the wayes and see.* There are many wayes in the world, some that are apparently the way of Death, and not a few that pretend to be the way of Life. If you would know which of all these wayes is the right, ask for the old path, the good way: *The old path*, that which was from the beginning. Godliness is no innovation, it is as old as the world, 1 Job. 1. 1. *That which was from the beginning declare we unto you.* Then it is the good as well as the old way. Antiquity alone is not enough to prove that we are in the right; there is an evil way, that is an old way, the way of sin is very ancient. The right way is the old and good way; there is a threefold good, Profitable, Pleasant, and Honest. Though the right way have both profit and pleasure in it, yet the proper Character of it, is the honest way, the way of Righteousness, Mercy, Holiness, &c. Mich. 6. 8. *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.* This is good, the good way, Phil. 4. 8, 9. *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, &c. these things do, and the God of Peace shall be with you.*

Secondly, *The New and living way*. Three things it may be you will ask me about this.

1. *What is this New and Living Way?*

I answer, Christ is this way, Job. 14. 6. *I am the way.*

Heb.

f Heb. 10. 19. *Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest.* Ver. 20. *By a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, &c.* A Christian that walks Heavenward, walks in Christ, Col. 2.6. He walks in union with Christ, in the Name, and Strength, and Spirit of Christ; he that is not in Christ, is out of his way; whatever good there seems to be in the way he is going, yet it is not saving good.

2. Whether there be two right *ways*?

I answer, No, but one; it is true, there is mention made also of the way of Gods Commandments, but these make not two distinct *ways*, but are one and the same *way*; *faith in Christ, and obedience to the Law of God*, are the one *way* of Life: He that walks in God, walks in Christ; it is through Christ, and our union with him, that we are strengthened and enabled to do the will of God; it is through Christ that what we do is accepted of God; there is no act of obedience, be it never so excellent for the matter of it, that is a step to the Kingdom of God, that hath not something of Christ in it, that is not done through his Spirit, and sprinkled with his blood: and so on the other side, whatever Faith, and Hope, and Confidence we have in Christ, if it be not such a faith, such an hope as brings forth obedience to the will of God, it cannot save us: this is the right *way*, and the one and only *way* of life; In all that general Assembly and Church of the first-born, that are already in Heaven, there is not one soul but entered by this one *way*. *Abel*, and *Enoch*, and *Abraham*, and *Moses*, and *David*, and *Peter*, and *Paul*, with the whole generation of Saints now in glory, they all went the same *way*, they walked with God, and lived, and died in Faith, and now inherit the Promises. And all the residue of Saints that are yet in their Pilgrimage; yea, who ever shall be in the Ages to come, must by this one

way enter into the Kingdom of God. This is the good and *old way*, which was from the beginning, this is the new and *living way* which shall be to the end, *Tit. 2. 8.* *These things I will that you affirm constantly, That they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works; these things are good and profitable for men.* If this be so, if this be the one and only way of life, then in what case are the sinful unbelieving world? Whither are ye going, O ye sons of folly? You tell us, you hope to be saved, what, in your unbelief and folly? Search and see if in the whole Book of God you find any other way of salvation, but Faith in Christ, and Obedience to the Gospel.

3. How can one and the same way be old, and yet new? I answer, 'Tis *old*, and yet not *antiquated*; 'tis *new*, and yet no *Innovation*; 'tis *old*, because it was from the beginning; 'tis *new*, because now in the latter end of the World it hath been newly cast up, made more plain, easie, and open.

Thirdly, The strait and narrow way, *Mat. 7. 14.* *Straight is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life.* Christians must go *by a line*, there is no elbow room for lust to expatiate; every step on this hand, or on that, is a deviation, it is a way that is hedged in; the Commandment is the hedge which limits us within a very narrow path: Christians must live *by rule*, they must not eat nor drink but *by rule*, they must not buy nor sell but *by rule*, they must not work nor sit still, they must not speak nor keep silence but *by rule*, *Gal. 6. 16.* *As many as walk according to this rule, peace be upon them.* 'Tis also a *narrow way*; the word might have well been translated, a *troublesome*, or *painful way*; the Verb, from which the word comes, signifies to oppress: there are many pressures and afflictions to be met withall in this way. The Cross is a Christians *Way-mark*: *Through many tribulations*

lations we must enter into the Kingdom of God. The way of sin is a Plain, there is neither hedge nor ditch to limit them, there is neither bush nor brake to discourage them.

Now this is the way which circumspect Christians take; this good and old way, this new and living way, this strait and narrow way, this is the right way, and this is also the most excellent way. For,

1. It is the way of Truth, *Psal. 11. 30. I have chosen the way of Truth: John 14. 6. I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life:* It is the way which the Truth or Word of God doth prescribe to us; it is the true way, that is, indeed, in all the parts of it, that which it declares it self to be: The way of sinners is a lie, a way made up of lies: The evil works of sinners are lies, *Prov. 11. 16. The wicked work a deceitful work*, the work of a lie, as the words signifie; their words are lying words; their very duties are a lie, *Hos. 11. 12. Ephraim compasseth me about with lies:* that is, with lying Duties, lying Prayers, lying Sacrifices, lying Praises; their Prayers are no Prayers, their Sacrifices are no Sacrifices, they do but dissemble with God, and deceive themselves in all their performances; their hopes are a lie, their comforts are a lie, their Refuges are a lie, the way of sinners is wholly made up of lies: But the way of Christians is a true way, their Duties, their Comforts, their Joyes, their Hopes have truth and reallity in them. *Psal. 25. 10. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth to them that keep his Covenant.* Now look what excellency there is of truth above a lie, so great is the excellency of this way of Christians above all other wayes.

2. It is the way of Righteousness and Holiness; Holiness hath a glory in it: Every thing, by how much the more pure it is, by so much the more preci-

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ous in its kind. What other excellency have the Angels of light above the Devils, but their holiness? What was it that transformed the Angels that fell into Devils, but the loss of their holiness? Wherein stands the reasonable creatures likeness to the God of Glory, but in their Holiness? This is the Divine Nature, they are made partakers of the Spirit of God, and of Glory resting upon them, 1 Pet. 4. 14. Holiness hath such a self-evidencing Excellency, that the Consciences of carnal men do often, whether they will or no, give their Testimony to it. Who is there almost, whom lust hath transformed into so very a Brute, but many times even when his tongue, is reproaching it, his conscience gives his tongue the lie? Who is there, whose lust hath so totally put out his Light, that doth not, in his serious judgment conclude, that a gracious, humble, meek, merciful, sober, heavenly life, is really more excellent (though not so sutable to his brutish appetite) then lewdness and sensuality? There is such a beauty and majesty in holiness, that doth command an acknowledgment of it, from all sorts of knowing men.

3. It is the way of God; not only the way wherein the Lord hath commanded them to walk, but wherein the Lord appears to them, wherein they have the Vision and Fruition of God; and therefore a godly life is often expressed by walking with God, by living in fellowship, or communion, or acquaintance with God, Psal. 16. 8. *I have set the Lord alwayes before me,* Psal. 17. 15. *I will behold thy face in Righteousness.* Enoch walked with God, Noah walked with God; Good company will make any way pleasant; how craggy or dirty soever our way may be under foot, it's pleasant to see the Sun shine over us. Psal. 50. 23. *To him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I shew the salvation of God.* The Lord meets his people in his wayes, and causes all his goodness to pass

pass on before them, proclaiming his Name, *The Lord gracious, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness.* This Vision of God makes all the labours and difficulties of this way sweet and pleasant to them; certainly this is a blessed way, for God is in it. Where is blessedness to be had but in God? how is blessedness to be had in God, but in beholding and enjoying of him? wherein stands the blessedness of Heaven, but in the vision and fruition of God? Christians, Let all the ungodly world say all they can to disgrace and disparage the way of Righteousness, as a wretched, disconsolate, and contemptible way; yet till they can confute your senses, and make you not to believe what you taste and see, be not discouraged; neither let them delude you into any better opinion of their ways of sin, from any pleasure, credit, ease, or gain, that is in them; God is in the way of Righteousness, and there alone to be found and enjoyed, and therefore this is the most blessed and excellent way.

4. It is the way of the Kingdom; the proper excellency of the means stands in this, that it will certainly bring about its end; that's our best way that will bring us safely home. This way is called, *The way of life*, Psal. 16. 11. *Thou wilt shew me the path of life*, 2 Pet. 1. 5, 11. *Add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, patience, godliness, &c.* For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom. If there were no other excellency of this way, yet this is enough to commend it, and exalt it above all other ways, that it's the way to Heaven. If the way of Holiness and Righteousness, were in all other respects, as despicable and uncomfortable a way as the world imagines it; if Godliness were in it self as great a burden and bondage as carnal men account; if all the reproaches, and slanders, and calumnies, and lying reports, that ungodly men cast upon the way of the Lord, were true; yet this, that

that it's the way to everlasting blessedness, would answer all that is spoken against it. If you were to go to *London* upon a business, wherein your life, and all that ever you had were concerned, you would not stand reasoning thus: Is not the way to *York* a better and more pleasant way; Whatever the way to *London* be, how long, or how dirty, or how dangerous, or how hard to find so ever it be, yet your life and estate depending on your going thither, leaving all other ways and disputes about them, you will take the way that leads thither. The way of the Lord, whatever you have to say against it, to discourage or make you unwilling to travel it, yet 'tis the only way you have to save your souls, the only way to eternal blessedness; when you have made all your objections, and all your excuses; you must take up this holy course of life, or you can never come into the Kingdom of God. The way of carnal jollity and merriment is, as you think, a more pleasant and delightful way: But is this your way to Heaven? The way of covetousness and worldliness, you count a more gainful and profitable way, but is this the way of life? The way of sloathfulness and idleness is, you think an easie way, but is this the way of the Kingdom? The strict and severe way of Holiness, hath little carnal delight, ease, and worldly profit in it; but is not this the way to everlasting life? *Heb. 12. 14. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see God.* Now if all this be so, (search sinners, search and consider if it be not so; consult the Scriptures, consult your Reasons and Consciences, and see if you find them not all bearing witness to this truth; and if these things be so, as hath been said) then come all ye foolish and vain-hearted persons, and judge of the unreasonableness of these scoffing demands of the looser sort to the people of God, who in scorn and derision, will be often asking of them, Why must you be

so nice? why so precise? why so strict, and making so much ado about every small matter? why cannot you be content to do as others, and take the same liberty as others? Why, 'tis all one as if they should demand of them, why will you keep your way, the way of Life? Why will you be saved? Why can't you be content to be damned as well as others? Is there not a great deal of wisdom and reason in such questionings, and scoffing demands? If you stood by a dangerous mighty Bogue, through which there was one narrow tract of firm ground, and should see a company of poor creatures even sunk, and almost swallowed up, and choak'd in the mud and mire, on the one hand and the other; and yet should you see them laughing, and mocking, and jeering at those who kept the narrow tract of firm ground that would bring them safely over, would you not say, they were all mad or bewitcht? This is the case of all foolish worldlings, they are sunk in the mud, they are even swallowed up and choaked with their lusts, and ready to perish, and yet they fall a laughing and deriding of them who will keep the sure way. Sinners, what do you mean? you are sinking, you are sinking; a few steps further, and you will be swallowed up: Why will you not come back, and get into this safe way? Leave your scoffing at the Saints, and learn of them; leave your judging and censuring, and follow them in the same holy steps, that they are going in before you.

II. They are upright and exact in the way, they walk on in the strait way, with a strait foot, *Psal. 119. 1. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, or the perfect, or entire in the way, Psal. 39. I said I will take heed to my ways, that I offend not.* It's said of Caleb, Numb. 14. 24. *That he followed the Lord fully,* Luk. 1. 6. 2 Cor. 1. 12. *This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our Conscience, that in all simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our Conversation,*
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in the world, 1 Thes. 2. 10. *Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and blamelessly we behaved our selves among you.* Observe it, they lived a holy, harmeles, blameless life ; and that holiness which appeared upon them, was not a cheat, or juggle, to deceive the world, but was really what it appeared to be : and for this they appealed to a threefold witness ; 1. A witness in their breasts, the testimony of their own *Consciencs* ; *This is our rejoycing, the testimony of our Consciencs.* 2. A witness in the world ; *Ye are witnesses,* your eyes have seen what our life hath been ; be but true witnesses, and then be you witnesses ; speak but what you have seen, and speak the worst (*among you that believe :*) The world will be ready to say, You are too crafty to let us know what you do in secret, when you are amongst your selves ; I, but sayes he, let them that believe speak, those that have been with us publickly and privately, what our conversation hath been. If it be said, They are of your own party, and will not speak all they know, then he appeals to a third witness, 3. A witness in Heaven, (*and God also :*) He that seeth all things, before whom are all our *wayes*, he that seeth all things, seeth our integrity and blamelesness.

But here, that I be not mistaken, I must distinguish betwixt their *aims*, or what they are pressing and reaching towards, and their attainments, or what they have reached to. The aims of these circumspect Christians in their whole course, are at perfection, *Phil. 3. 14.* *I press toward the mark :* They would keep their way without the least wandring, they would not tread one step awry ; they would not speak one word amiss, they would not think one thought amiss, they would not neglect any one duty, nor commit any one sin, but would be what the Apostle would have them to be, *Holy and harmeles, the children of God without rebuke, in the midst of a*

crooked generation. These are the *Aims*: and as to their *Attainments*, though they fall short of their duties, they cannot do as they would, *The good that I would I do not*; yet they do their best, they follow the Lord with the best of their understanding, serve the Lord with the best of their strength, and when they have done their best, they mourn and grieve that 'tis no better.

That I may more distinctly open this exact and upright walking in the way of the Lord, which their hearts are set upon, I shall consider it,

1. As it hath respect to the Commandment.

2. As it hath respect to Conscience.

1. Their exact walking, as it hath respect to the Commandment, stands, 1. In having respect to every Commandment, to the whole Word of God, *Psal. 119. 6. Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments*, *Mat. 28. 20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.* The life of a Christian is a busie life, the Word of God finds us much work to do, we have work for every faculty and member; our understandings have their work, our wills, affections, consciences, tongues, ears, eyes, hands, have all their particular works assigned them; every grace hath its work, faith hath its work, love hath its work, patience hath its work. Every lust makes us work, to restrain, deny, watch, crucifie them; these are weights and clogs that will hang on, and will hinder us from all other works, if we let them alone; these are working against us continually, and apt to set us on work against our selves, a working mischief and ruine to our souls, if they be not continually looked to, and kept under. We have work against us for every condition; our prosperity finds us much work, to keep our selves humble, heavenly, watchful, in an holy fear and jealousy, lest the contentments and pleasures of this life make an invasion and in-
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rode upon our hearts, and spoil us of our graces and comforts. Our afflictions find us work, to keep our spirits from sinking and fainting, from murmuring and envying at those whose way doth prosper. We have all the set and solemn duties of Religion to attend upon ; we have Praying work, and Hearing work, and Sacrament work, and Reading work, and Heart-searching work, and Meditating work : We have work to be done for others, our neighbours and acquaintance, our friends and our enemies, our families, our servants, our children ; we have not only work to do for them as men, but work to do for God with them. God hath work for us to do among our neighbours, God hath work for us to do in our families, and for our friends and enemies, instructing work, reproving work, praying work, works of mercy and charity, &c. we have a continual succession of work, every day hath its business. Christians must have no sleeping dayes, their very Sabbaths must be working dayes ; we must be at work for our souls, even on those dayes wherein we must do no bodily work. *There remains a rest for the people of God :* such a rest, wherein they shall work no more, nor be weary any more, wherein all their work shall be *to eat of the fruit of their doings :* but on this side that rest, there is no rest, but we must be full of labour.

You see the Word hath provided much work for Christians ; now those that are circumspect and upright, and in the way, will be through-paced, and stick at nothing the Word requires ; they are for any service, ready for every good work, they will not pick and chuse, they will not halt or balk with God, but as the Apostle, Col. 3. 10. *Endeavour to stand compleat in all the Will of God.* Those duties that have most pain in them, those duties that have most hazard attending them, those duties that have the greatest contrariety to their natural temper

temper and dispositions; if they be duties, if the Word says, *This must be done*, this is that which the Lord requires, an upright heart will yield and stoop to them. Brethren, if there be any one thing required in the whole book of God that you cannot consent to, but allow yourselves in the ordinary neglect of, concerning which you say with *Naaman, The Lord spare me in this one thing*, whatsoever else you do, you can have no comfort that your hearts are upright.

2. In having respect to the most *spiritual and inward part of the Commandment*; the Commandment contains *negiendā and faciendā*, sins to be avoided, and duties to be performed; and both these are either outward or spiritual. 1. As there are outward sins to be avoided, sins of the mouth, sins of the eyes, ears, hands, so there are inward sins, spiritual wickednesses, *evil thoughts*, Jer. 4. *unclean lusts*, Mat. 5. 28. *inordinate affections, an evil conscience*, and the like. Now sincere Christians have an eye to, and hold a strict hand upon these spiritual wickednesses, labour to have their consciences purged, *their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience*, their affections and lusts mortified, Gal. 5. 24. *They that are Christs have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts*: their care is not only that they be no Drunkards, nor Swearers, nor Liarers, nor Railers, nor Oppressors, nor of proud, froward, fretful, impatient carriages and behaviours; but they would not cover, they would not lust, they would not be of a proud, impatient, fretful, envious, unpeaceable heart; they would not that an evil thought, nor a vain thought should lodge within them. 2. As there are outward duties to be performed, praying, hearing, works of mercy, &c. so there are spiritual duties, purely spiritual, as the eternal acting of faith, and love, and hope, and the fear of God, the souls choosing of God, cleaving to God, relyinging, delighting in God, meditating of him, &c. Ex

all Christians have a special respect to those *Spiritual duties*, in the exercise thereof stands chiefly their living in an holy fellowship, communion and acquaintance with God ; and for outward *duties*, their care is to perform them *spiritually*, they pray with the mouth, and pray in the Spirit ; they praise the Lord with their lips, and offer up their hearts as a spiritual sacrifice ; they hear with their ears, and with their understandings also ; they labour to bring their souls under the word, to pour forth their souls in prayer, to draw forth their souls in their very alms, *Isa. 58. If thou draw forth thy soul to the hungry, Psal. 69. 10 I chastened my soul with fasting.* Oh Brethren, if this be to walk exactly, then how much looseness doth this discover in us, looseness in our very duties ; men do not only drink like *Libertines*, and swear like *Libertines*, and neglect duties like *Libertines*, but perform duties like *Libertines* : thou that usest to pray in thy Closet, or in thy Family, or in the Congregation, in an outward formal way, and dost not pour out thy soul in prayer, thou prayest like a *Libertine* ; thou that fastest, and doth not chasten thy soul with fasting, thou fastest like a *Libertine* ; thou that hearest, and dost not bring thy soul under the Word, thou hearest like a *Libertine* : this is loose praying, and loose hearing, loose from the Rule, which requires the exercising of the inward man, as well as the outward.

3. In observing the *Commandment to the utmost*, and here I shall give a fourfold further description of them.

1. They endeavour to get up their hearts to the highest pitch of *Affection, care and activity* : They would be the best Christians, the most humble, the most mortified, the most patient, the most exemplary and active Christians : Not sloathful in business, but fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord, Rom. 12. 11. 2 Cor. 7. Yea, what care ; yea, what clearing of your selves ; yea, what indignation ; yea, what vehemence & desire ; yea, what zeal, &c. A sincere Christian

would

would be a zealous Christian; in his sincerity stands the truth of his Christianity, in his zeal stands the height of it. Zeal is not a distinct grace, but the *height of every grace*: Love in the height of it, Desire in the height of it, Care and Resolution to follow God in the height of it: A zealous Christian exercises every grace, performs every duty, and doth it *with all his might*; he is not willing to spare, or to favour himself, *but will spend, and be content in the work of the Lord*, the flesh will be pleading for a little ease, for moderation, it will be soliciting the soul, as *Peter did Christ, Pity thy self, favour thy self*, thou wilt never hold out at this rate, thou wilt pull all the Country about thine ears, if thou beest thus hot and forward; but the soul returns the same answer as Christ did to him, *at thee behind me Satan*, hold thy peace, sloathful heart, let me alone, for I will speak for God while I have a tongue to speak, while I have an heart, while I have an eye, while I have an eye, while I have a Soul, while I have a Being, I will follow on after the Lord, I will serve him, I will praise him, I will sacrifice all I am, and give to him, and then come on me what will.

2 They are *studying and seeking out opportunities for service*. Such Christians are of *strict lives*, but of *larger hearts*; of *strict Consciences*, but of *large desires* and *high aims*. Grace sets limits to their consciences, but none to their holy affections; they never do so much for God, but they are studying how they may do more, *Isa. 32. 8. A liberal man deviseth liberal things; a merciful man deviseth merciful things, a righteous man deviseth righteous things*: he doth not only exercise *Liberality and Mercy* and work *Righteousness* when he hath an opportunity put into his hands; but he sits down and considers what great things the Lord hath done for him, what *marvellous loving kindness* the Lord hath shewed to him, and thereupon studies, and casts about what greater things

then yet he hath done, he may do for the name of God as it is said of the wicked, *Prov. 6. 14. He deviseth mischief continually*: And *Psal. 64. 6. They search out iniquity they accomplish a diligent search*; search out for every opportunity to work wickedness, to satisfy their lusts: *S* Righteous men search out, and make a diligent search after opportunities to work righteousness, *2 Sam. 9. 3. Is there not yet a man left of the house of Saul (saith David) to whom I might shew the kindness of God?* Is there not yet a poor soul in distress, to whom I might shew kindness for the name of God? is there not yet a poor Family in misery, to whom I might shew mercy? Is there not yet a poor soul in want, to whom I might shew my supply? Is there not yet a poor sinner, to whom I might give counsel? Is there not yet a poor Saint, to whom I might administer comfort for the sake of my God? as it is said of the Devil, *He goeth up and down, seeking whom he may devour*: so may it be said of such, they go up and down seeking whom they might save and recover out of the snares of the Devil. Other men, what good soever they do, it is as little as may be, their consciences will not let them be quiet, but something must be done; when they have done so much as will but keep conscience quiet they have done: A sincere Christian hath his love to satisfy, his desires to satisfy, as well as his Conscience: he loves much, and it is not a little duty that will satisfy strong love.

3. *They shun occasions and temptations to sin*: they would keep at as great a distance from sin as possible, they are careful to keep far enough within their line, they dare not venture to their utmost border, lest they go beyond it ere they are aware; a wary Christian having observed what things have proved snares and temptations to him, and have drawn him aside to iniquity formerly, will take heed how he comes nigh them again: If carnal society has

cool

shol'd and damp'd his heart, and lest a fleshly savour up-
 his spirit, he will take heed how he comes into such
 company again: If going to his utmost liberty in the
 use of the creatures, either meat, drink, or apparel, hath
 tempted him beyond his bounds, he will be warie how he
 follows himself the like liberty, and will deny himself the
 freedom he might use, rather then again run himself up-
 on danger; he is sensible of his weakness to stand against
 temptation, and thereupon is the more watchful that
 he run not into temptation. Men that are bold to ven-
 ture into temptation, to venture into evil company, to
 venture themselves among frothy and vain persons, es-
 pecially when they have proved what a snare such have
 been again and again to them, it is a sign that they have
 little fear of sin, care of their souls or consciences, or re-
 gard to God or godliness; a circumspect Christian dares
 not venture so: prophane men wonder at them, why
 they will be no more free nor familiar with them, not so
 much as to sit and be merry with them, *They think it*
strange (saith the Apostle) *that you run not with them*: Oh,
 the Reason is, they are afraid of the hook, and therefore
 are not meddle with the bait.

4. They abstain from all appearance of evil, that is, the
 command, *1 Thes. 5. 22. Abstain from all appearance of evil*;
 they would live, not only *sine crimine*, but *sine labe*; not
 only without any fault, but without any flaw or scar
 upon them. *Oportet Caesaris uxorem absque suspitione vivere.*
 To the end they may cut off all occasion from them
 that seek occasion against them, they would do not on-
 ly things honest, but things of good report too; they
 inquire concerning what they are about to do, not only
an liceat, but *an deceat*; not only whether it be lawful,
 but whether it be comely; there may be divers things
 that may be lawful in themselves, which are yet unseem-
 ly, may look with an evil face: *All things are lawful,*

(saith the Apostle) *but all things are not expedient.* A circumspcct Christian endeavours both to keep a good Conscience, and to keep a good Name; he would keep a good Conscience for his own sake, and a good Name, as far as may be, for his Brethrens sake; his desire is but to *bold up the power of Religion,* and to *keep up the credit of Religion;* and therefore it is herein he exercises himself, both to keep a Conscience void of guilt in the sight of God, and a conversation void of offence in the sight of men. The servants of Christ see that there are many eyes upon them, that will espie the least spot upon them, and therefore their care is, to keep themselves *unspotted of the World,* to carry themselves so, that if it be possible, the World may have nothing to spot them withal; they are sensible how obnoxious they are to the severe and rigid censures of the world, and that all the reproaches that fall on them, fall on the Lord and his Gospel. What an out cry is there in the world against those that fear God, as if they were Beasts and Thorns, the Fire-brands of the world, and the troublers of Nations, that turn the world upside down, as if there were no Lyons in the world but Christs Lambs, as if Christs sheep were all *Wolves?* and therefore to prevent this, and put to silence the ignorance and malice of evil men, they endeavour as much as may be to gain upon the hearts, and to get the good opinion of all men, to walk so, that they may not only profit, but please others, and render the Gospel the more lovely with them, they would not only *wrong no man, defraud no man, provoke no man,* but they would *displease no man,* give no man any occasion of offence or distaste at them and their way. Sinners, as much as the poor Saints are cryed out against for troublesome and unquiet, yet they are desirous rather to please, than provoke you; they would please all the world as far as they may, without hurting themselves or them. Indeed they would not sin against God to please men; they

they would not wound their consciences to save their credits, they would not lie, nor dissemble, nor flatter, nor connive at you, nor comply with you in sin to gain your good will, but as far as they can, in order to your good, they are willing to become *all things to all men*; let them alone but to do their Duty to God, to your and their own souls, and if that do not displease you, they are willing in all things to do their best that they may not offend you.

And thus have I given you the description of these men, by the exactness of their walking according to the *Scriptures*, which stands in their endeavour to have respect to *every command*, to the most *inward and Spiritual* part of every Command, and to observe every Command to the *utmost*; to this I shall add two things;

1. When they have done all that they can, after this care and circumspection, they will acknowledge themselves *unprofitable servants*: they are thankful, and bless God for helping them on in this way, but yet they are *humble*; they are so far from boasting that they have done so much, that they are ashamed that they have done no more: Whilest they admire the Grace of God towards them, they abase and *abhor themselves in dust and ashes*, 1 Cor. 15. 10. *I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, (no thanks to me) but to the grace of God that was with me*: Some comfortable difference there hath been (blessed be God) betwixt my Conversation, and the wayes of many others; but, *who hath made me to differ from another? or what have I, that I have not received?* and if I have received it, why should I boast, as if I received it not? Something through the Grace of God hath been done, some service hath been performed, but what's all this, to what I might have done? what's all this I have done, to what I have left undone? How small is my service, if it be compared

with my sins? How few are my duties, if compared with my neglects? What's all I have done for God, to what I owe to the Lord, to that which he hath done for me, *who hath redeemed my life from death, and crowned me with loving kindness?* But oh! What's all I have done, to what God hath promised to do for me? What's my *Work* to my *Reward*? What's my *Race* to my *Crown*? Such humbling self-abasing thoughts as these, do Christians exercise themselves in, to lay themselves low, even in the dust before the Lord. The prophane World brand them for a proud Generation, who say to their Brethren, *Stand aside, I am holier than thou.* What more common in such mouths? precise, but as proud as the Devil. It's true, and Christians will freely acknowledge it, and take the shame of it upon them, that this pestilent evil *Pride*, is a Weed apt to spring up in the richest Gardens; we can hardly be lifted up to an holy course, but we are apt to be puffed up with a vain conceit; we can hardly do well, but we are apt to think too well of *what to do*; many a precious Christian hath groaned and travelled in pain under the bondage of a self-exalting heart; but yet he is bewailing it, and bemoaning himself for it; yea, his very disease helps on to a cure, his pride is a means to humble him, his being lifted up above measure, is the very *thorn in the flesh* that brings him low; he abhors himself the more, and abaseth himself the lower, for that he hath exalted himself so high; and the constant desire and labour of his soul is, to bring himself to, and hold himself in such lowliness of heart and life, that whatever he be, or hath done, *the excellency of the power may appear to be of God, and not in him.*

2. Whatever they have done, they dare not trust upon it, or be found in it; they dare not be found in their own righteousness, but count all things nothing, so that they may win *Christ*, and be found in him. They labour

bour as zealously in the works of righteousness, as they would have done, if this must have been their righteousness, in which they must have stood before the Lord; and yet they depend as singly upon Christ, and his righteousness, as if they had never done any thing.

Before I proceed any further, let us a little consider, what it is of all this which hath been spoken of these men, *wherein their folly lies*: are they fools for making so wise a choice, for choosing the better part; those true riches, that enduring substance, those everlasting treasures, which are laid up in another world; that they will not be cheated, nor be beguiled by the Devil of that better inheritance, by those toys and fooleries, the pleasures, honours, and other vanities of this present world? that is, *are they fools that they are not bruits*? are they fools that they have taken the right way to the obtaining and possessing that blessedness which they have chosen, that they do not content themselves with idle wishings and hopings for that Heaven, and promise to themselves they shall not fail of it, though they never take that course that leads to it? that is, *are they fools that they be men*? and will hearken to their reasons and understandings, which tell them, that the end cannot be attained without the means? Are they fools that they will be upright, that they will not lye, nor swear, nor curse, nor drink, nor riot, nor defraud, nor oppress, but are willing to walk in all the Commandments of the Lord blameless? that is, *are they fools that they are honest men*? Is this their folly, that they will not content themselves with a formal out-side Religion, with outward Reformation, but will take care of the heart and inside, as well as the out side; will perform spiritual duties, purge themselves from spiritual wickedness; will make sure work, by laying the Ax to the root of that wickedness which breaks forth in their lives, those lusts that war in their members?

bers ? that is, *are they fools, that they are not hypocrites ?* Is this their folly, that they are so free, and forward, and zealous in that which is good ? that is, *are they fools, that they will love God so much, and fear God so much, and go on so far, and so fast in obedience to him ; that they do not give up the strength of their hearts, the vigour of their affections, and care, and labour, to the Devil and their lusts, and reserve only some little for God and their Souls ? Are they fools, that they will be so wary and watchful against sin, and temptations to it, that they will keep themselves so far out of danger as may be ? that is, *It is their folly that they are not fools ?* Stand forth ye wise men of the world, that charge the Saints with folly ; read over all the particulars of that true description I have given you of them, and tell us in good earnest, if you can, in which of the particulars their folly lies ; is it that they are not bruits, that they are men, that they are honest men, that they are not hypocrites, or that they are not fools, that you account them such ? Men are fools that they are so precise ; 'tis all one, as if you should say, if they were wise they would be bruits, knaves, and fools. Behold here the wisdom of this world ; Hath not God made the wisdom of the world foolishness ?*

Thus we have seen what this exact and upright walking is, as it respects the commandment ; Now shall we consider it,

2. As it respects Conscience : And thus I shall give this double description of these circumspect Christians.

1. They take great care of Conscience.

2. They give good heed to Conscience.

1. They take great care of Conscience, and take great pains about their Conscience. Their care they take two-fold :

1. About the informing and instructing Conscience.

2. About the keeping Conscience tender.

1. The

1. They take great care about informing and instructing their Consciences; Conscience is to be made the inward guide of their way. As the Word is to be their guide without them, so Conscience is to be their inward guide. Their care therefore is, that it may not be a blind guide. Hence it is, that they are so much in searching and studying the Scriptures; they are much conversant in their Bibles, they are observed to be frequent in hearing Sermons, diligent in noting and repeating what they hear; are often putting their doubts, and opening their difficult cases, to those that are able to resolve them, and all this to get their Consciences enlightened and instructed in the will of God: Though there are many things that they are ignorant of, yet there is nothing they are willingly ignorant of, their desires and prayers to the Lord, are the same with the Psalmist, *Psal. 119. 19. Hide not thy Commandments from me* and with Elisha's in *Jab, What I know not, teach thou me.*

2. They take great care to keep their Consciences tender: Tenderness of Conscience, is sometimes taken for weakness of Conscience; a weak Conscience is that which is both weak-sighted, and is not able to discern between things that differ, but is very subject to mistakes, it mistakes good for evil, lawful for unlawful, and it's also full of troublesome and unreasonable fears, and endless scruples, which, as the crudities abounding in a weak stomach, do make it heave and rise, not only at that which is hurtful, but sometimes at that which is wholesome enough; it often fears where no fear is; this tenderness of their endeavours are to cure, and not to cherish. True tenderness of Conscience is the perfection of it, a truly tender conscience is a sound conscience, which is quick of sense, and presently feels, and smarts, & is put to pain with any thing that is really an offence to it. A tender conscience is as the eye, the least dust that's blown into it, will make it

it smart, and this not from soreness, but quickness of sense. The dim sighted World look upon all tenderness as weakness; and count all such, whose consciences cannot down with any thing, as a company of sickly, weakly, brain-sick spirits; and all their doubtings, and dissatisfactions, to be humour and conceit, and peevishness, and causeless fears; but this tenderness is so far from being the *sickness*, that it is the *health* and soundness of the heart; it was the commendation, and not the reproach of King *Josiah*, 2 *King*. 22. 19. *That his heart was tender.* These tender circumspect Christians are very chary of keeping their hearts in; and therefore any thing that would brawn or harden them they carefully shun; as the eye that cannot endure the dust that falls into it, is quick at its ward, to keep off any thing that would be noxious to it; and this is the reason why Christians can bear any thing better than sin, because it's this alone that's hurtful to Conscience; they are hardy enough to bear afflictions, these are no prejudice to Conscience; it is not against their Consciences to suffer, but it is to sin; afflictions may perplex the thoughts, and too much disquiet and dis Temper the passions, but will never trouble Conscience.

Object. Tender Consciences! who more stubborn, and peremptory, and obstinate, and stiff in their way, then these? Do you call this Tenderness?

Sol. There is a Threefold stiffness: Manifested,

1. In the refusing to receive Conviction, touching any thing wherein they are faulty, or in an Error.

2. In a refusing to revoke their Errors upon conviction that they are in a fault; let either of these be charged upon them, and let the charge be made good, and then call them stubborn, obstinate, or what you will.

3. In a refusing to act contrary to their conviction, to do that which Conscience is not satisfied in; which, after their most free and fair debate, most candid enquiring in-

to, and most impartial weighing all that is, or can be said for it, their conscience still tells them, they should sin in doing it: Hereupon, though all their friends should come and perswade, and entice them; though all their Adversaries should fall a scoffing and reproaching them, a threatening and persecuting them, yet still they refuse to yield. This stiffness is that steadfastness which the Lord requires in them, and is so far from being inconsistent with true tenderness, that it is their tenderness.

If an Idolater should come and perswade such to worship an Idol, if he should threaten them with the Fiery Furnace, with the Lions Den, and yet they will not; Is this their stubbornness? Or, is it not their tenderness? If an Adulterer should perswade them to Uncleaness, if a Libertine should come and think to scoff them out of their strict and holy course, or to tempt them but to some little indulgence to their flesh, in some such way as this; why, what hurt is there in a little mirth? what great matter is it, to take a little liberty now and then? why, should you think your selves wiser than other men? and yet they will not hearken: will you call this their obstinacie, or their tenderness? Here be obstinate creatures indeed, they will not be Idolaters, they will not be Unclean, they will not be Libertines, they will not be Liars nor Dissemblers, they will by no means be perswaded to rebel against God and Conscience, and therefore they be obstinate. Perswade them to that which is good, convince them that they are in an Error, and then trie whether they will be obstinate: tell them, *Friends, You walk disorderly, unchristianly; you are uncharitable, censorious, contentious, proud, vain,* and convince them of it, and see if they will not hearken to you, and thank you for your admonition.

Christians, prove your selves to be conscientious by your tenderness; however the world go about to blast and

and reprovech you with your consciences, and call your uprightness hypocrisie, your tenderness obstinacy, yet part not with it so, but still resolve with *Jab*, chap. 27. *Till I die, I will not remove mine integrity from me.* There is a double way wherein we may be said to remove our integrity: 1. By departing from it. 2. By belying it.

1. By departing from our integrity, by turning aside to iniquity, by being found false to God and Conscience, and by a liberty in sinning, exchanging this truth and tenderness of heart, for hardness and hypocrisie. Take heed you do not thus depart from your integrity. Beloved, you live in a World, wherein Conscience is like to cost you dear, if you will own any such thing as Conscience, or consciencious walking, you are like to smart for it: Look to it, that your Conscience be found such as is worth the suffering for; do not suffer for the name Conscience, or conscientious, but for the thing: Look to it, that whatsoever you suffer for Conscience, you suffer nothing from conscience, for your wronging, or abusing, or violating of it. Sufferings for conscience, for an upright conscience, are precious: Sufferings from conscience, from an evil and abused conscience, will be bitter. Let all the World be against you rather than conscience; whom the world smites for conscience, God will heal; whom the World judges, God will justifie; but if our hearts condemn us, who shall plead for us, or comfort us? Carry your selves so, that conscience may be your Comforter, not your Tormentor: There is no torment like the stings and revenges of an abused conscience: Keep your consciences tender, and they will neither hurt you, nor suffer you to be hurt by others; keep your integrity, and it will keep you. The *Psalmist* prays, *Psal. 25. 21. Let integrity and uprightness preserve me:* Let me not think to shift my self of trouble, by sheltering my self under sin: Let me not go about to make my peace with my troublesome adversaries, by cast-

ing in my lot with them; let me never think to be beholding to iniquity for my safety; *let integrity preserve me*. Preserve thou me in mine integrity, and let it preserve me. Christians give the World leave to talk and do what they will, but when they have said and done their worst, *keep you honest, and you shall keep you safe*; Your Consciences will be your confidence, and your securitie; *He that walketh uprightly, shall walk sure*. Be not reproached out of your refuge, let not the World find you obstinate against your dutie, nor yet yielding to iniquitie; be not stubborn, but yet be stedfast; yield to reproofs, while you slight reproaches.

Let us be so gentle, flexible, easie to be entreated, so careful to offend, so ready to please all men in all things which are not against Conscience, its peace and purity, that we may convince them, that in those things wherein we fix and do not yield, it is because we *cannot*, not because *we will not*; & let us yet be so stedfast in those things which would be a wound and defilement to Conscience, that we may let them see, it is but a vain attempt for them to think to reproach or persecute us out of our integrity; let us be sincerely tender, not out of any sickness or weakness of Conscience, or from groundless scrupulositie, much less from sullenness of *humour*, but from *sound mind*, and pure Conscience.

Let us be universally tender of every evil, not only of the greatest and most scandalous, but of the smallest sins; not only of open sins, such as come to the view of men, but of the most secret sins, the most inward and spiritual sickness, such as need fear no reprover but Conscience; let us be tender, not only of committing sin, but of any omissions or neglects; not only of our neglects of duties, but our negligencies in duties, and that deadness, formality, cursoriness, coldness, hyppocrisie, dissensions, which hence arise; of the neglects, or negligent

ligent performances of our duty to God, of our duty to Men, to our Families, to our Friends, to our Enemies, our not pitying them, nor praying for them, not wishing them well, not doing them good for their evil, and endeavouring by our soft, meek, inoffensive and loving carriage towards them, to win and gain upon their hearts. Oh Brethren, we have much to blame our selves for, though evil men have little; or if they have more, they are so unhappy as not to hit upon the right, judging us, and condemning us, not for our faults, but for the good that is found in us. But however, we have much to blame our selves for, the Lord help us, we have many haltings, and many failings. Oh, it were well for us if our hearts had no more to say against us, than men can say: what unevenness and inequality is there in our goings? what intermission of our care and watchfulness? whatever our aims and desires are, what an universal regard soever we have to the will of God, yet when we come to practice, in how many things do we go awry? It may be we dare not wholly neglect a duty, not a praying season, out a hearing season, but our hearts will presently be upon us, and smite us for it; but are not we often remiss and negligent in our duties, and go out with it without any trouble? may be we take some care in the matters of our *own* souls, but what do we for our Families, our Friends, and Acquaintance? may be we dare not conform to evil men, nor have fellowship with them in their evil wayes, but do we not *connive* at them? may be we do not *render evil for evil, railing for railing*, but do we do good for evil, do we pity them, pray for them, and labour by all lawful means to gain upon their hearts? may be we dare not be unrighteous, or unjust in our dealings, but are we not unmerciful, unpeaceable, unquiet? we dare not lie, nor swear, or curse, but are we so watchful as we should be against idle and vain talkings, frothy and unfavoury

unfavoury discourses? may be we cannot suffer any rooted malice to abide in our hearts; but are there not many sudden and furious fits of passion and anger breaking forth, much bitter and provoking language? are we not fretful and impatient, without ever laying it much to heart? Doth conscience check us for, and make resistance against every evil? Let us be universally tender, universally careful. Oh that our consciences were but as tender as our lusts, our pride will not bear any thing that reflects upon our Reputation, our covetousness will not bear any thing that is an *hindrance* to our gains, our passions will hardly bear the least cross or displeasing word; how touchie are we at every little thing that does offend us? Oh if conscience were in every thing as tender as Lust, what Christians should we be! but wo to us whatever we should be, how short do we fall? how unequal are our goings? how unsteady are our tempers? sometimes tender, sometimes hard, sometimes watchful, sometimes heedless, in somethings careful, in some things careless; how do we too much justify the wicked, and harden them in their Reproaches of us? Let us *press* on with so much earnestness to this evenness and exactness in all our wayes, that it may be seen, that however we have not yet attained, yet we are following after; though we have not reached to; yet we are reaching towards it; though through infirmities we fall into many iniquities, yet we allow not our selves a liberty in any; such a Conscience as this, such a course as this, will plead for its self against all the calumnies of the World.

2. By belying our integrity; that is the sense in which *Job* speaks in the forementioned Scripture, *I will not remove mine integrity*; that is, I will never bely my integrity: Call you me an hypocrite, or what else you please; God forbid that I should justify you by belying my self, and saying as you say. Brethren, do not out of any base

fear, or to make your peace with sinners; do not say of your tenderness and watchful walking, this was my pride or my hypocrisie, or my humour, or self-will, but stand upon your own uprightness; *Till I die, I will hold fast my righteousness, and will not let it go, mine heart shall not reproach me while I live, ver. 6.*

2. They give heed to Conscience, they will hearken to and follow conscience: the voice of a well-instructed Conscience, is the voice of God, and to this voice they will hearken, without turning aside in any thing, *either to the right hand, or the left.* By turning aside to the right hand, I mean the same which Solomon does, by being righteous over-much, *Eccl. 7. 16. Be not righteous overmuch.* The imposing upon our selves such strictness, and those severities which God hath not imposed, the making those things to be sins, which God hath not made to be sins, and thereby making the narrow way narrower than the Lord hath made it: and this may be done,

1. By putting Religion in such things, in which God hath put none, laying other bonds and burthens on our necks, than those which the holy Ghost hath laid on us. The abridging and cutting our selves short of that Christian Liberty, which the Lord hath not only allowed, but commanded us to maintain and stand fast in.

2. By putting more Religion in any thing than God hath put in it, by laying a greater weight and stress upon the lesser and smaller things of Religion, than God hath laid on them. By the lesser duties of Religion, I mean not any mortal duties: the lowest of these, the lowest duties of mercy, justice, charity, truth, &c. are to be reckoned among the weighty matters of the Law, wherein we cannot erre by being too strict: we cannot be too just, or too true, or too merciful, nor too zealous for truth, justice, and mercie, *Mat. 5. 19. He that breaketh the least of these Commandments, and teacheth men so, shall be called*

led the left in the Kingdom of Heaven: but by the less things of Religion, I mean the circumstantial, of the worship of God, the outward forms of worship, the gestures, &c. to be used in it. This is a being righteous overmuch, to put more in these circumstantial, than the Scripture hath put to be so zealous for, or against them, as if Religion stood or fell with them, 1. Cor. 7. 19. *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping the commandments of God.* Some there were that did hotly contend for Circumcision, and did put much of their Religion in that; others were as hot against it, and this was much of their Religion in that; both these the Apostle checks, telling them, that *Circumcision is nothing, nor uncircumcision is nothing*; these are not the things wherein Religion stands; keep the Commandments, fear God, walk before God in holiness and righteousness, let your zeal be spent that way, but trouble not your selves so much about these lesser matters. Two things must here be added.

1. This is not so to be understood, as if Christians were to swallow all things of this nature, without examining whether they be agreeable to the word of God or not; due regard must be had to the satisfying of Conscience, even in the smallest thing; we may not yield to practise any little things which are against our Consciences, though we may not spend our zeal about them, as if Religion lived or died with them.

2. Even against these lesser things there ought to be zeal express, if they should be like to prove destructive to the substantial of Religion, and hinder the main end which they pretend to promote; by this it appears what I mean by turning aside to the right hand, or being righteous overmuch.

By turning aside to the left hand, I mean the same which Solomon there doth, by being wicked overmuch, Neither be thou wicked overmuch. This is not to be understood, as if

there were any wickedness which is not too much, a little is too much ; it checks and restrains all liberty to sin ; though in many things we sin all, yet let not sin get the head of thee, keep it under, keep it down as much as possible, lest it grow to that height, that it prove thy speedy ruine ; by turning aside therefore to the left hand, understand all declinings to licentiousness ; either,

1. By making duties no duties, making sins to be no sins, and so making the way of life broader than Christ hath made it ; and stretching our liberty beyond our line ; as turning aside to the right hand, stands in the infringing of our liberty, in imposing such burdens which God hath not imposed, so turning to the left hand, stands in taking up a liberty which God hath not allowed, throwing off those burdens which God hath imposed, making it no matter of conscience to be strict, not only in the circumstantials, but neither in the substantials of Religion ; so binding conscience, and bribing it over to side with Lust, that it accounts it not a duty, to be so strict and so precise in any thing, but that there may be a great latitude allowed, and a remitting of our care and zeal, especially in cases of any hazard or danger that our zeal and strictness is like to cost us.

2. Making bold with duties and sins, neglecting known duties, running upon known sins, making shipwrack of conscience to satisfy lust, when though conscience stands convinced, that holiness, in the strictness of it, is our duty ; and that licentiousness, and living after the flesh, is our sin ; yet we will indulge to our selves fleshly liberty.

Now this is another character of circumspect Christians, they will walk according to Conscience in all things, without turning aside either way, either to the right hand, or the left ; they are not willing to turn aside to the right hand, either by putting Religion in those things in which God hath put none, or by putting more of Religion

Religion in any thing, than God hath put in it; their zeal is for the substantials and weighty things of Religion; as for the circumstantial, though they will not act in the contrary to conscience, yet they list not to be contentious about them, nor censorious of those, who agreeing in the main, do differ in these things from them.

But their great care is not to turn aside to the left hand, they will not for fear of being too precise, grow profuse and prophane; but as the Apostle, *Heb. 13. 18.* *They have a good Conscience, willing to live honestly in all things, endeavouring to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live righteously, soberly, and godly in this present evil world, being holy and harmless, the children of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked Generation.*

III. From this way they will not be withdrawn either by any hopes or advantages on the one hand, or by any fears or dangers on the other; they have not taken up Religion on such slight grounds, as to be either flattered or frighted out of it. Christians at their first engaging in the way of the Lord, do sit down and consider what it will cost them to be Christs Disciples, they count all the charges, they cast up all the damages that they can be subject to before-hand, and foresee that there is enough in Christ to make amends for all, and to save them harmless at the last, whatever befalls. They count upon tribulations, losses, reproaches, and the greatest of temptations; and if they did not foresee, that the gain of godliness would countervail all the losses and inconveniences its like to be attended with, they would not have adventured on it; but seeing for a certainty they can be no loofers, hereupon they set up their staff, determining not to depart for ever. They take Christ and his wayes for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in prosperity and affliction; they resolve to stand or fall, to suffer and reign, to live and die with him; They promise to him, as *Ruth* to *Naomi*,

Mat. 1. 14. *As the Lord liveth, I will not leave thee; whither thou goest I will go, where thou lodgest I will lodge: They will take their lot with Christ where-ever it falls: Christ hath said to them, I will never forsake you, Heb. 13. 5. and they have said the like to him; he that hath not thus engaged, is no true Christian; this absolute resolution to be ever the Lord's, never to forsake him, is of the essence of true conversion; he is no true Convert that is content to follow Christ in fair weather only, as far and as long as he safely may; a sincere Convert will follow Christ absolutely and unalterably. Now being thus engaged, whatever befalls them, it is no more than they looked for; they are called Fools, and counted stubborn, and refractory, self-will'd, self-conceited, and they look'd to be counted such, and so it moves them not: they are set upon by flatteries, and tempted by outward prosperity, but it cannot prevail, Thy money perish with thee, sayes Peter, Germana illa bestia non curat pecuniam: 'Twas said of Luther. Money will do nothing with them, Preferment will do nothing with them, Prisons, Banishment, Death it self can do nothing with them; None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto me, so that I may finish my course with joy, Act. 20. 24.*

And as they will not be drawn to a total Apostasie from Christ, so neither will they be brought to allow themselves in any little deviation, Psal. 44. 17. 18. *All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy Covenant; our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined thy way: In what case they were, you may see in the foregoing part of the Psalm; Thou hast cast us off, thou makest us to turn our backs upon our enemies, and they that hate us, spoil for themselves; thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us, &c.*

Though

though all this be come upon us, yet have we not, &c. Our
 heart is not turned back: We do not repent of our choice,
 we do not wish our selves back amongst the prosperous
 world, we think never the worse of the Lord, or his
 way, we have as good a will to the Lord, high an esteem
 of his wayes, as ever we had before we were thus afflicted:
 there's not the least abatement of our love and affection:
 we were now to begin again, if we were now to chuse
 whom we would serve, and know as much we do now,
 we should make the same choice; our heart runs out the
 same way, and in the same strength that ever it did; those
 many waters that have run upon us, have neither quen-
 ched, no not so much as cool'd our loves; *neither have our*
steps declined from thy way: We have neither been turned
 back in our affection, nor turned aside in our practice;
 through the grace of God our hearts have been kept up-
 right, and we have made *strait steps to our feet.* Dan. 6. 10.
 we read that when a Decree was made, *That whosoever*
should ask any Petition for thirty days space, either of God
or Man, save of the King, should be cast into the Lions
Den: Yet Daniel would not forbear to pray to his
 God; when he knew that the writing was signed he went
 to his house, and his windows being open in his Cham-
 ber he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed,
 &c. Carnal men would have been ready to have said,
 What a precise Fool was this Daniel? What great mat-
 ter was it that he stood so much upon? it was not the
 committing a sin that he was urged to, but only the for-
 bearingance of a Duty; he was not required to fall down
 before an Image, as the *Three Children* were. or to
 worship any false God, but to forbear, for a time, to
 pray to the true God. If it had been the worshipping
 before an Image that had been required, some would
 have reasoned thus; Why, what great matter had that
 been, to bow in the house of *Rimmon*, to bow before an

Image, or an Altar ; this is not praying to them? There is a great difference betwixt *Worshipping an Image, and worshipping God before an Image* ; what is there in all this? But this which *Daniel* stands upon, hath not so foul a face: 'twas only the *forbearance* of his duty to God, and that only for a time: Was this such a crime, to forbear praying for a few weeks, for the saving of his life? Or if he would needs pray, he might have done it secretly, and kept his devotion to himself; Must he needs keep his hours and open his windows too? Yea, he must do it, and he will do it: *Daniel* would not only continue his course of Prayer, but he would not give his Adversaries occasion to think that he was affraid to pray; he held in his duty, being called out to a confession of his Religion, to let his Adversaries know, that he had not such a slight and low esteem of it, that he was affraid to trust his God with his safety, whilst he continued in the exercise of his duty. It's true, that in matters circumstantial, such wherein there may be variation without prejudice to the substantials of godliness such which are not against their Consciences, which they may submit to without sinning against God; here they are not stiff, nor refractory, but for peace sake, and in order to the gaining upon the hearts of others, they are willing, with the Apostle, *1 Cor. 9. 20. To become all things to all men*; in such things wherein they can satisfie themselves, they are willing, as far as may be, to gratifie the minds of others.

But for the Substantials of Religion, the matters of Faith, the matters of Righteousness and Holiness, the worshipping of God in Spirit and in Truth, according to his own Ordinances and Institutions, or any thing else of the same import with these; here they are resolved, whatever come upon them, or become of them, not to relinquiſh, or be drawn aside from them, by any solicitations whatsoever; they must obey God rather than

men:

men; they must follow God, though therein they forsake and provoke all the World. In matters which God hath left to their liberty, they are willing to use their liberty, according as it may be behooveful for the Gospel. In matters that concern their personal interest as men, they list not, they ought not to be contentious; spare them but the liberty to keep a good Conscience, give them leave to fear God, and worship God; give them leave to be holy and righteous, and to walk before the Lord in their integrity; and for any thing else, you may persuade them to it with ease: But if you intice them away from their God, or impose upon them, to the prejudice of a good conscience, you were as good spare your labour, speake no more to them in such matters, they are at a point, God they will follow, a good Conscience they will maintain, what ever come on them, to the end of their dayes.

Thus I have given you a description of the Scripture-precisians, which is summarily this; They are the same with sincere godly men, men fearing God, who are inwardly renewed after the image of God, who are adventurers for another world, are gotten into the way of life, and are walking on carefully and heedfully in that way, whose aim and endeavour is to live, not according to the wills and lusts of men, but according to the Word and Will of God, not according to humour and fanisie, but according to Conscience? a people that will neither make the way to Heaven narrower than it is, by being scrupulous and nice, where God hath given them liberty; nor will make it broader than it is, by taking up looser principles, or allowing themselves in loose practices. A people that dare not adventure their souls upon that easie, formal, careless, outward way of Religion, that the most do, but are willing to make sure work, by walking to the exactness of their Rule, and living up to the

the height of their principles ; and who in this holy Course is stedfast and immoveable, will neither be bribed off by the flatteries, nor beaten off by the frowns of the World, but will retain their integrity, hold fast their holy profession, and hold on in their holy course, and this to the death.

Concerning these men, I shall now prove, and make evident to the Consciences of all impartial persons, in the second place, *That they are no Fools but truly wise men.*

In order hereto, I must first discover what's meant by *Fools*. A Fool is a man void of understanding, (we are not now discoursing of natural Fools, but of those that are such upon a moral account) a man void of true wisdom. Wisdom is of two sorts :

1. *Fleahy Wisdom*, a carnal policie ; which consists in an understanding where the interest of the flesh lies, and in the ordering and managing of our selves, and our affairs so, that we may advance and secure this interest by the interest of the flesh, I mean, all those things which please and gratifie the flesh, and wherewith the fleshy minds of men are most delighted, and place their content and happiness in, as outward peace and quiet, outward ease and security, outward plenty and prosperity, outward credit and reputation ; he that can order his affairs, and steer his course so, as will most advance and best secure these his outward concernments, that which way soever the world go, he may live in peace, and quiet, and credit, and plenty, and pleasure, this is a fleshy wise man. Concerning this wisdom, the question is not in this it will easily be granted, *That the Children of this World are wise in their generation, than the Children of Light*, can make a better shift to live in the world, to keep themselves whole in all changes and casualties ; the Apostle disclaims this wisdom, 1 Cor. 1. 12. we had our conversation in the World, not in fleshy wisdom, but

the grace of God, and in simplicity and godly sincerity.
 2. Spiritual wisdom, which consists, 1. In the understanding where our main interest lies, which is not in things temporal, meat, and drink, and cloaths, and money, and houses, and lands, and pleasures, and honours; but in things Spiritual, in the love and favour of God, in a good Conscience, in Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the holy Ghost; and in things eternal, in that Glory, Honour, and Immortality which shall be given of God.
 2. In ordering our selves and ways so, as to make the best provision for securing of this our great and eternal interest, that whatever miscarriages there may be in things of lower value and least durance, that wherein our eternal happiness stands, may be secured to us; this is taught in Scripture, *The wisdom which is from above*, wisdom to Salvation; and this is the only true wisdom. God hath made and will make all fleshly wisdom to appear to be folly. Concerning this true Wisdom, this spiritual Wisdom, it is, that I shall now make good, That *circumspect precise Christians are no fools, but the only wise men;* and that from these Reasons.

1. God accounts them no fools.
 2. They will not be accounted fools at last, neither of God nor men.
 3. The properties of wise men are found in them.
 4. The Treasures of Wisdom are found with them.
- Reas. 1.* God counts them no fools; they are no fools upon a true account, whom the World counts fools, but they only are such whom God counts fools, as the apostle, 2 Cor. 10. *Not he that commends himself is approved, but he whom the Lord commends.* so not he that condemneth himself, or is condemned of men for folly or simplicity, is disapproved, but whom God condemneth. Beloved, whose judgment will you take? will you stand to the judgment of God in this case? His judgment

ment we have plain, *Job 28. 28. Unto man he said, The fear of the Lord, this is wisdom; and to depart from evil, this is understanding. Psal. 111. 10. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do his Commandments. The [beginning] of wisdom;* that notes either, 1 The entrance of wisdom? men never begin to be wise, till they come to be godly. Look how long thou hast lived a stranger from God, in a carnal unconverted state, so long thou livedst a fool; thou never camest near the threshold of true wisdom, till thou learnedst the fear of the Lord. When the Repenting Prodigal came to his father, he came to himself, his understanding returned to him; he was besides himself before, but then he came to himself. 2 The top or height of wisdom; *Caput sapientie*, the word signifies a godly man, for true wisdom is the head, and not the tail; excellent wisdom is found in him. In these, and multitudes of other Scriptures, you have the judgment of God concerning these men. God is infinite in wisdom and know all things and persons what they are; and God is true and all things and persons are certainly what he says they are. Are you wiser than he? Will you believe your own conceits and apprehensions before the Word of the All-wise and True God? Either you must make Sinners Fools, or God a Liar.

Reas. 2. They will be accounted no fools at last, neither by God nor men: They only are to be accounted fools now, that will be accounted such at last; at present men's eyes are blinded, they cannot discern betwixt light and darkness, betwixt wisdom and folly, and so are subject to great mistakes, but at last men's eyes shall be opened, this blind world shall then see, and look upon all the wayes and transactions of men here below, and all the various states and conditions of the several sorts of persons in the World, with another eye than now they do.

When the designs, and ways, and actions of men shall be brought to their issue, when all vizards shall be pulled off, and all faces and hearts shall be made bare, and naked and open, then every one will see who have behaved themselves wisely, and who have plaid the fool, 1 Cor. 3. 13. *Every mans work shall be made manifest*, and thereby every man shall be made manifest, the day shall declare them: If you ask, what day? I answer, the last day, when every man shall have finished his work, the day of Judgment, which is both a day of tryal, when all shall be proved and examined what they are, and a day of Recompence, when every man shall be rewarded according to his Work. Let this now determine the question; let those persons, who will be by both God and men, by good men and evil men, accounted fools at that day, let them be accounted fools now; and let those men be accounted wise now, whom God and all the world will account such in that day of tryal. Now the World are divided in their judgments, some think Christians fools, others think them wise, but at last all the World shall be agreed, and of one mind; and those that shall be judged fools then, by the common judgment of all, let them pass for such now. But you will say, what is this to the satisfying of our present judgment? how can we tell now, who shall then be accounted wise or fools? I answer, besides that the word is before you, which is the Law by which that Judgment must proceed, from which you may easily learn what mens judgments shall be; besides this, let every man appeal to his own conscience. Here are two sorts of persons in the World: one sort are such as own God in the world, and follow God, and follow the Scripture, and withdraw themselves from the loose and vain ways of the wicked, spending much of their time in praying, and hearing, and meditating of God, exercising themselves in holy watchfulness over their hearts, and all their wayes; labouring

all things, that both here and hereafter, they may be accepted and approved of God. The other sort live at their ease and their pleasure, mind their Farms, and Oxen, and bellies; hope they shall do well enough hereafter, but do not much trouble themselves, nor take any care or pains about it. Let every man ask his own heart thus; which of these two sorts do I think in my conscience will be found fools, and which wise in the day of Judgment? Beloved, will you speak your consciences in this thing? If it were put to your choice, amongst which of these two sorts you would be found, and take your portion at last, what choice do you think you should make? Whether would you be found amongst those that spend their dayes in ignorance, or those that seek after the knowledge of God? Amongst those that labour and strive to make sure of the love and favour of God, or amongst those that take no care about it, but leave it at uncertainty? Amongst the vain, or the serious; the diligent or slothful; the heavenly minded, or the earthly minded? Dare any of you say, Let my soul stand amongst the Drunkards, and Gluttons, and Gallants, and Good-fellows, amongst the Covetous, and Proud, and loose, and careless ones of the Earth? Amongst the Formalist, the Mockers, and Scoffers at the pure ways of the Lord? Let my portion be with them, my place be with them: Let my sentence be according to their sentence. If you dare not make this your choice or desire, to be found amongst such a that day you thereby may perceive, what the verdict of your own conscience is in this case; what ever you say of them now, your conscience tells you, that these will be found the only fools in that day, and those only wise amongst whom you would choose to stand.

Reas. 3. The properties of wise men are found in them. I shall instance but in two.

1. They understand themselves aright.
2. They built sure.

1. They

1. They understand themselves aright. 1. They understand wherein their *interest* lies; we say of a wise man, he is a man that understands himself. that understands what he hath to do : Christians are men of understanding, they understand what that one thing is for which they live; in the pursuit and security whereof, if they prosper, they know they shall be happy, whatever else they miscarry in, and upon their miscarriage wherein, they know they are undone, whatever else they prosper in; they know there is but one thing needful, and that that one thing is their eternal rest, the blessedness to come, the happiness of the other World, the obtaining and enjoying of God for the portion of their souls ; be thou mine, and I have what I look for, either in heaven or earth, *Ps* 4. 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and in earth there is none that I desire in comparison of thee?* *Ps* 4. 6. *There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us?* *Ps* 27. 4. *One thing have I desired.* *Phil* 3. 14. *This one thing I do.* Christians have but one thing wherein they are concerned, God is all they have to regard, this one thing they have in their eyes, they see before them where their happiness lies; and they are able to say, *Whom have I? or what have I but thee?* This one thing is in their hearts; one thing have I desired, *That I may dwell in the house of the Lord for ever;* and this one thing is in their hand too, the work and the business they mind to carry on : *This one thing I do forgetting that which is behind, and reaching forth to that which is before ; I press to the mark, for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* Sinners, you that take your selves to be so wise, you are a company of poor mistaken creatures, mistaken in your interest ; you are in the World, you know not for what, you know not what you have to do here ; you are those men, upon whom God said, *Ps* 14. *To look down from Heaven, to see if there*

were

were any among them that did understand and seek God. (That did understand) that is, that knew that their great business they had here to do, and their only happiness which they had to seek, lay in God, and that thereupon applied themselves to the seeking of God; but behold, they were all out of the way, there were none amongst them that did understand this, that this was their great concernment, and thereupon they were all out of the way, quite off from that work that they were sent hither about: it is no wonder you shoot so wide, when you mistake your mark: it is no wonder you do you know not what, when you know not what you should do: Is this the work you came into the world for, to Eat, and Drink, and Sleep, and Buy, and Sell, and Marry, and bring forth Children, and load your selves and them with burthens of thick Clay, to Sport, and Play, and Riot, and Laugh, and spend your daies in meer vanity and foolerie? Are there no higher things than these, which God hath set before you, and more worthy your choice and labour? Have you no souls to mind, that are of an immortal being? and are there not lasting Riches, abiding Pleasures, an enduring substance that may be had, that must be had for these souls of yours to live upon, or else they will be eternally miserable? and do you not understand that your souls are of more value than your perishing Carnal cases? and that the making provision for your souls, is of far higher consequence than the pampering of your bodies? Will the loss of your souls be recompenced by all your bodily pleasures and plenty? will not the saving of your souls ballance and make amends for any losses, crosses, miscarriages in your fleshly interest? If you do not understand this, yet do not judge them fools that do

2. They understand their way, *Prov. 14. 8. The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way.* The wisdom of a Merchant lies not only in his skill, to choose

and deal in the right and richest commodities, which will bring in the greatest and most certain gain; but in his understanding the mystery of his Trade, whereby he may upon the best and surest terms procure these commodities, to know the best way of dealing and traffiqueing for them: Christians by their being acquainted with the Scriptures, and having been trained up in the School of Christ, are come to understand their Trade, *the Mystery of godliness*: They have not only learned to prize the salvation of God, and the glory and blessedness of the World to come, but are well acquainted with the way that leads to it. Carnal men are ignorant of the way; though they understand in general, that Religion is the way to Salvation, yet poor miserable creatures, they mistake their Religion; any little smatterings of the knowledg of God, with some profession of Faith and Repentance, especially if it be joyned with some little outward devotion, now and then calling upon God for mercy; this they count Religion enough to bring them to Heaven; and any that's more than this, they think it more than needs; these are the Fools indeed, if we may believe the Scripture, *Jer. 5. 4. Surely they are poor, they are foolish, they know not the way of the Lord.* Sinners are wise enough in their own wayes; the way of sin they know, the way of lying, and oppression, and unrighteousness, the way to wealth, and honour, and temporal preferments they sufficiently know, they have studied and travelled these wayes, and are well acquainted with them; but all this while they are foolish children; surely they are foolish, *they know not the way of the Lord.* Christians are wise, and herein their wisdom stands, *they know the way of the Lord*; they have a light without them, shewing them this good way; they have a voice behind them, telling them, this is the way, walk in it; they have made it their business to enquire, and studie, and

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travel this way; surely these are wise, they know the way of the Lord, they know their way to Heaven; if they know not the way to be rich in this World, yet they know the way to be rich towards God, if they know not how to live honourably in the World, yet they know how to live honestly; if they know not how to please men, yet they know how to please God; if they cannot keep a fair correspondence with the world, yet they know how to keep a good Conscience in the world; if they know not how to escape trouble and affliction, they know how to suffer it; if they know not how to escape the wrath of men, yet they know how to escape the wrath to come; if this be wisdom, to be skilled in the matters of Religion and Righteousness, in the matters of Faith and a good Conscience; to have found out the way of life, by which to escape from Hell beneath, then these godly men are wise men; surely they are wise, they know the way of the Lord.

Obj. Et. But you will say, Why may not we be in the right way as well as they? Why may not our way of Religion be as good a way, and as wise a way, and as safe a way as theirs?

Sol. Will you make use of your Reasons? if you will, you shall answer this Objection your selves; their Religion and yours are not two wayes of Religion, but as to the Principles of it, are but one and the same; the difference betwixt them and you is this; You take up but a little part of that Religion which you both profess, and you will have but a little to do with that little of Religion which you do take up; you little mind or study, or are exercised in that which you count your Religion; these precise ones take up the whole of Religion, and they give themselves wholly to the study and practice of it; they make it their business to search the Scripture, that they may understand the will and the way of the Lord, and to govern their hearts, and order their lives in all things ac-

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cording to it : So that now, if you will answer two easie questions, you shall thereby be able your selves to answer the Objection ; the first question is, *Who are most like to be in the Right ? either those who endeavour to practise all that they profess ; or those, who though they profess the truth, do practise scarce any thing of it, but a small part of it, and that the lower, and the less considerable part of it, the bare out side of it ?* This is no hard question. I hope you'll acknowledge, to be resolved ; and the second question shall be as easie, *Who is like to be in the right, the diligent Christian that makes it his business to study his Religion, or the careless Christian, that seldom spends a serious thought about it ?* Answer but these two questions, and then your selves will be able to give a reason why it's more like they should be in the right than your Brethren, shew your selves men: here are a company of poor creatures of you, who have spent your time in ignorance and idleness, as to the matters of God and your Souls who little meddle with that of Religion, which your selves say you must do if you will be saved ; you say you must believe, you must repent of your sins, you must pray to God for forgiveness, and yet what great strangers are many of you from these things ? It may be, if you consider it, you have often gone whole days and weeks together and have scarce ever prayed, no not so much as after your own fashion, nor scarce had any thoughts of Repentance, or asking God forgiveness ; you eat, and drink, and go forth, and come in, and lie down, and rise up, and never so much as look up to God for his mercy and blessings: these others in the mean while, make praying, and reading, and hearing and minding God and their Souls, and their eternal estate, their daily study and business; now what an unreasonable thing is it to imagine, that those who so little meddle with any Religion, or any thing of Religion, should be as like to understand it, as

those that make it their daily work; Oh Beloved, how can you be so confident you are in the right, when you never seriously enquire whether you be or no? and how can you think you have any wisdom in you, when you trust a matter of such weight and importance upon a meer presumption? You are strongly conceited that you are as wise as others, and in as good a case, and in as good a way, and upon this conceit you venture your Souls. Friends, you are a sad wonder to me, and I do so much wonder, that men should think, that carelessness is as good as diligence, licentiousness as good as strictness; that the loose, and blind, and easie way which men take up, is as good, and as sure, nay, a better and more certain way of life, than the strict and industrious way of the despised Saints; that I very much wonder, how men that believe and know any thing of the Scriptures, can make themselves to think, that, that sortish, dull, lifeless way, which they satisfy themselves in, can give any of them the least hopes of Salvation.

2. They build sure, so that whosoever or whatsoever falls, they stand sure for ever. They are those wise builders of whom Christ speaks. *Mat. 7. 24. Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him to a wise man, which built his house upon a Rock, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not.* *Psal. 26. 12. My foot standeth in an even place.* All other persons and parties stand up in slippery places, and have but an uncertain standing. When they are in the height of all their glory and confidence, they are often gone in a moment. A Christian stands sure; which way ever the wheeld of Providence moves, it moves in favour of the upright, he is still upright, most when he is undermost, he hath the better, when he hath the worst, all the vicissitudes and returns of prosperity and affliction, do make no change upon him as to the

he main; he is as happy under all his outward losses, as in his greatest gains, he's as honourable under the greatest contempt that's poured out upon him, as under the highest humane applause: he's as safe in the greatest dangers, as when there is no danger appearing; he's built upon that Rock, whence the greatest winds and waves can never beat him down: he's *built upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Eph. 2. 20.* He hath Religion, Righteousness, Innocency, yea, the Truth and Strength of the Almighty God to uphold him; if ever a Christian falls, Christ must fall with him; if ever a Christian fall, the Scripture must fall with him; That word, concerning which Christ hath said, *Mat. 24. 35. Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.* He shall never be disappointed of his hopes, unless faithfulness can disappoint: he shall never be deceived, till Truth becomes a Lie; he shall never wholly be overcome, unless Almightyness become Weakness. The carnal World build all their hopes and comforts on the Sand, on the wisdom of the flesh, on the riches, strength and multitude of their partakers on the successes of their carnal counsels: they bottom their very souls upon meer fancies and Presumptions, upon that wood, hay and stubble, the Doctrines, Invention, and Traditions of men; nay, they have their foundation in the dirt and mire, they strengthen themselves in their wickedness. If iniquity be able to support them, if unrighteousness be able to exalt them, if ungodliness can secure them, they have something to lean upon; but if Righteousness be it that must carry it, if a good conscience, simplicity and godly sincerity; if the favour and faithfulness of God, an interest in Christ be the only sure refuge, then where is the generation of the Ungodly? When they are in the height of all their Glory 'tis but one turn of the Wheel and they are thrown off their legs, their hopes,

and their joys vanish, and all their thoughts perish. If God, and Christ, and Scriptures and Conscience, be of any consistency, Christians have enough. It unrighteousness and wickedness should carry it in this world never so clearly and constantly, yet if righteousness and holiness will but carry it in the world to come, Christians are safe enough. Carnal men who build their hopes on this earth, when the earth is shaken, their hopes are shaken, their hearts are shaken, and they are even at their wits ends. But saith the Psalmist, *Psal. 112. 7, 8. The heart of the righteous shall be established, he shall not be afraid of any evil tidings; his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. Psal. 46. 2, 3. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed, and the Mountains be carried into the Sea, though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the Mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Though all the earth should be in an uproar, though the whole world should be turned topsie-turvy, yet we will not fear: though the Mountains shake, yet our hearts shall not shake. Are they not wise men, that are gotten into such a case?*

Reas. 4. The Treasures of wisdom are found with them. You will yet, it may be, be ready to say, what have they gotten by their Wisdom? where is the Income and Revenue, that all their wisdom hath brought them in? If you were to give us an account of their losses, you might easily bring in a Bill; some of them have had so little wit, as to lose all they have; but, will you take your Bill, and write down all their gains? Why, if you will hearken to me a while, I will shew you what they have gained: They have gotten great treasure, as poor as any of them seem to be, they are the richest men in the world. Particularly,

1, They have gotten the Pearl. Christ is theirs: they are those Merchants, *Mat. 13* which have sought good-

by pearls, and they have found the pearl of greatest price. Cant. 2. 6. *My Beloved is mine*: that Corner-stone which is laid in Sion, which is a precious Stone, 1 Pet. 1. He is theirs, that Pearl which is the price of Souls, the Ransom that was paid for them, which is the food of Souls, their bread and water, the living bread, the water of life, of which whoso eateth and drinketh, shall live for ever: He is theirs, God hath given them him whom they have sought, Isa. 9. 6. *To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given*: He is become their own, and they call him their own. (*My Lord and my God*) said Thomas. *My Saviour*, said Mary. This is the richest of treasures that comprehends all treasures in it; this will supply all their necessities, make up all their losses; they want nothing that have Christ to be theirs. Other men have riches, and I have none, (saith the Saint) I but Christ is mine. Other men have Friends in the World, and I have none; Oh but I have Christ to be my Friend. Other men live at ease in their pleasures, but it is not so with me; but Christ is mine, and I find rest and pleasure enough in him. When I look upon the pomp, and the glory, and gallantry of the world, I must say, *These are none of mine*; when I look upon the rich fields, the pleasant Valleys, the fruitful Hills, the Oxen and the Sheep, the Gold and the Silver of the Earth, I must say, *These are none of mine*; but yet the Pearl is mine, and that is all things to me.

2. They have gotten the *white-stone*, the stone of absolution; Rev. 2. 17. *I will give him the white-stone*, which is a token of absolution: It was a custom among the *Heathens*, to absolve persons by giving them a white stone. and to condemn by giving a black stone, Rom. 5. 10. *We have received the atonement*; God is reconciled, our sins are forgiven, our souls are absolved from those black bills of inditement which were laid in against us?

We have received the *signal* of this attonement, the holy Dove, the Spirit of the Lord in our hearts, and the sense of this attonement hence arising, the peace of God possesseth our hearts; we taste and see what it is to be at peace with God, in those smiles from his face, in those dawnings of the light of his countenance, & the shedding abroad his love in our hearts. Sinners, whilst you carry with every one his black stone, his sentence of condemnation, the earnest of eternal vengeance, these have their white stones, the marks of their absolution, and the earnest of their eternal blessedness. When you look on their naked backs, their hungry bellies, the cold lodgings, that are the lot of many of them, you will say, Surely these are a poor and foolish people, but see that precious stone they carry with them where-ever they are, there you may behold their riches and wisdom. When you consider your own fullness and braveries, your dainties and delicates, your ornaments and jewels, your possessions and honours, you are transported with pride and jolligie, and have almost forgot that you are men; but what signifies that black stone in thy breast, that guilt thou carriest in thy Conscience? Consider sinners, what it is to have God your enemy, Wrath your portion, the Curse cleaving to your possessions, your sentence of death written in your hearts, and upon your consciences, and then you will think those men have gotten something, that have gotten their absolution from all this.

3. The *white Robe*, or the Sanctification. Holiness is not only imposed on Christians as their duty, but bestowed on them as their Priviledge: Therefore the Lord promises to his people, as their encouragement, to suffer affliction, *Heb. 12. 12. That thereby they shall be made partakers of his holiness*: This is the precious *Treasure* of the Saints. *Mat. 12. 35. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things. A good man,* though

though he hath no treasure in his house, nothing in his purse, nothing in the field, yet he hath a good treasure in his heart, a treasure of Wisdom and Knowledge, a treasure of Grace and Holiness, a treasure of Faith and Patience, of Humility and Mercy; and this is a rich treasure. 'Tis the rich in Faith, rich in grace and holiness, that is a rich man indeed: a heart full of grace, is a better treasure than a house full of Gold; as much as strong men glory in their strength, as much as wise men glory in their wisdom, as much as great men glory in their greatness, one grain of grace is more worth than all: As much as holiness is despised and trampled on by the men of this World, it is of greater value than Mountains of gold and silver. Holiness is the *health* of the Soul, the soundness of the Spirit. Health is the poor mans portion. Look what sickness is to the body, that is sin to the Soul, the diseases of it; sinful souls are sickly souls, and as it is with sickly bodies, so it is with sinful souls, they are neither fit for employments, nor capable of any considerable enjoyment: A sick man can do little service, and can take little comfort in any thing he hath; sinful souls are good for nothing, and can take comfort in nothing that is good: Holiness is the health of our Souls, Sanctification is the restitution of the soul, with all its faculties, to their rectitude and soundness. By holiness the Soul is, 1. Made fit for service, and that is a great blessing. What a misery is it to be a useless, unprofitable Lump, good for nothing? to be serviceable, and that to such high and noble ends, as the honouring the Name, the carrying on the designs, the shewing forth the virtues of the eternal God, what a blessed thing is it? 2. The Soul by holiness is made capable of enjoying the Lord, and all the gifts of God. What is the reason that Christians, under a decay of grace, and overgrown with corruption, can take comfort in nothing? Tell them of the Promises of the Gospel, of the privi-

Priviledges of the Gospel, of the Joys, and Hopes, and Glory to come, they can take no pleasure, they can find no sweetness in it; Promises do not affect them, Priviledges do not affect them, future hopes and expectations do not affect them: What is the reason of this? Oh! their souls are sick, and cannot taste, or relish any thing that is good: by how much more healthy men are, by so much more delight they can take in their business, by so much more comfort they can take in their friends, by so much the more pleasure they can take in their meat and drink, or any thing else that they enjoy: And so it is with a healthy Soul, by how much the more holiness, by so much the more sweetness: Duties are sweet, Ordinances are sweet, Promises are sweet, the Society of the Saints is sweet, the Meditations of God are sweet: They can truly be said to enjoy their Friends, to enjoy the Promises and Ordinances, to enjoy their very Duties, to enjoy God in all they have or do whose Souls are in such an holy healthful state. This is another of the Treasures of Wisdom which the Saints have gotten, they have gotten holiness.

4. *The Adoption, Rom. 9. 4. Who are Israelites, who is the Adoption.* There is a twofold Israelite, an Israelite *after the flesh*, such were the natural children and posterity of Abraham; and an *Israelite after the Spirit*, such are all believers, the children of the faith of Abraham; and according to this distinction of *Israelites*, there is a twofold Adoption, *outward and visible*, which pertains to the natural Seed; *inward and invisible*, which is the peculiar priviledge of the Spiritual Seed, and the children of the Faith of Abraham. The Adoption comprehends in it
 1. *The grace of Adoption*, whereby the Lord hath given us the relation of children, and a right to all those priviledges and blessings that flow from that relation, *Job, 1.*
 2. *To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become*

become the Sons of God. 2. The Spirit of Adoption, Gal. 4.
And because you are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit
of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. This
spirit is called the Spirit of Adoption, not only because
it works in us the dispositions, and dutiful affections of
Sons, but especially, because it witnesseth our Sonship,
Rom 8. 15, 16. Ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, where-
by we cry, Abba, Father; the Spirit it self beareth witness
with our Spirit, that we are the children of God: The Spi-
rit it evidences and witnesses our Sonship, and thereby en-
ables us to cry, Abba, Father, that is, to call God Father;
it gives us the boldness and confidence of children, to come
to him on all occasions, to make our complaints to him,
to make known our wants, our fears, and our dangers to
him, to make our requests to him, to depend on him for
provision, for protection; to put in for a child's portion,
or a share in his riches; to lay claim to, and to lay hold
upon the inheritance of Sons; to cast our care upon him,
and to quiet and comfort our selves in the sufficiency of
our Father. I have nothing, said the Child, but from
my Father, and to my Father, but my Father hath enough; this is a
blessed and glorious Priviledge that Christians have ob-
tained, to be the Sons and Daughters of the Lord Al-
mighty, 1 John 3. 1. Behold what manner of love the Father
hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God.
Remember it a small thing unto you, said David, to be Son-in-
law of a King? Why, what King was it? it was one
that was none of the best, and yet he was a King, and
that was a great thing for such a poor man as David was,
to be Son-in-law to a King: But what is it to be Sons
and Heirs to the King of Glory? The Lord sayes to all
his Sons, as the Father of the Prodigal said to his eldest
son, Luke 15: 31. Son, thou art ever with me, all that I have
is thine: Son, Daughter (saith the Lord) thou shalt be ever
with me, and all that I have in Heaven and Earth, all is
thine.

things, Mat. 5. *Blessed are the peace-makers; why so? they are the Children of God:* Gods children are blessed children, not one of them shall go without the Fathers blessing. The Lord hath not only, as *Isaac*, a blessing for one of his children, but as *Jacob*, he hath a blessing for every child. If thou be Gods child, God, even thy God will give thee his blessing.

5. The Kingdom, Mat. 5. *Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*, Luk. 12. 32. *Fear not little Flock, for it is your Fathers pleasure to give you the Kingdom.* To whom is the Kingdom given? To the little Flock, not to the herds of Swine, the droves of Wild Beasts, the prophane multitudes of this wild and wicked World, but to the little flock of Christ, those few that he hath called out of the World, who follow him, theirs is the Kingdom. What Kingdom? Why, the Kingdom of Heaven, a Kingdom of Glory, a Kingdom of Righteousness, a Kingdom of Peace, a Kingdom of Joy and Blessedness, the everlasting Kingdom. And here we are fallen upon that height, and depth, and length, and breadth, which cannot be fathomed, or measured; here is the wisdom of Christians, they have gotten the birth-right and the blessing, the Sonship, and the Inheritance, theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven; here is the Faith and Patience, and Hope, and Prayers, and Sufferings, and Labours of the Saints, the riches of their Faith, the fruit of their Patience, the matter of their Hope, the return of their Prayers, the reward of their sufferings, the end of their labours, the everlasting Kingdom.

Now judge upon all this which hath been said, whom ye will account the wise men; shall those be accounted wise, whom men, or those whom God accounts such? Shall those pass for fools now, who will be found wise at last? Are those the wise men, who never understood what they had to do here, and so never minded nor heed-

ed that necessary work for which they were sent into
 world? Are you Infants and Children that mind nothing
 else but their play, and their meat, and their cloathes, are
 those, the wiser ones of the world? Are they the wise
 Builders, who have laid their Foundation on the Sand?
 When the winds, and the floods, and the waves have
 broken down, and blown away all that you have been
 building, will you then boast of your wisdom? You that
 count your selves such wise men, and demand what the
 Saints have gotten, tell us what you have gotten by all
 your VV wisdom? The Saints have something to shew for
 themselves as witnesses of their prudence, Christ, the
 hidden Manna, that living bread that they have laid up
 for themselves against a time of need, that peace which
 they have gotten to support them in a time of trouble;
 these are some things to shew they have not foolishly lost
 their time; every grace that they have gotten, every
 comfort that they have treasured up, there is something
 more to shew, every dead lust pleads for them; *Sampsons*
 dead Lyon was not a greater proof of his strength, than
 Christians dead lusts are of their wisdom; they have
 gotten the birth-right and the blessing. Who was the
 wiser of the two, *Esau* that sold the birth-right, and lost
 the blessing, or *Jacob* that got both? they have gotten
 the Kingdom too, theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven;
 whilst others have been dividing the spoils here below,
 scrambling for shadows and fancies, sharing the Domi-
 nions and Dignities, and Preferments, and Pleasures of
 this world amongst them, these have been laying up
 a store for themselves a good foundation against the
 time to come; doth this speak them such a foolish
 company as you would make them? Have they made
 such a wise choise, and taken such a wise course, and yet
 must they go for fools? is this your serious and sober
 judgment? Do you in earnest think, that in that change
 which

which the Gospel hath made upon them, they are chan-
 ged for the worse ? that in the choise which they have
 made of God, rather than the World ; of Christ, instead
 of their lusts ; of things eternal, before things temporal
 that they have herein chosen to their loss ? Is this your
 thought ? will you write down this as your Judgment
 and put your hand to it, and be content that this writing
 should be produced at the last Judgment, as the Test by
 which you will be tried, whether you are wise or fool-
 ish ? Are you Christians, and do you believe the Scrip-
 tures, and are you not yet ashamed that any such
 thoughts should come into your hearts ? Will you say
 The Devil is the best Master, and he's a Fool that will not
 be his servant ; but Christ is an hard Master, and none
 that's wise will venture after him ? Will you say, that
Moses was a Fool in refusing to be called, the Son of *Pha-
 raoh's* Daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction
 with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of
 sin for a season ; that the Apostles and the Disciples were
 fools, that *Peter*, and *Paul*, and *John*, and *James*, were
 fools, with the rest of those holy Men and Women
 who denyed themselves, took up their Crosse and fo-
 lowed Christ ; and that the Scribes and Pharisees, and Pub-
 licans, and Harlots, and Drunkards, and Gluttons, that
 made a mock and a scorn of him and them, had more
 wit than they ? Is not this the very thing you say, in
 charging folly upon those, whose aim and desire is to
 walk in the same steps that those primitive Christians
 walked in before them ? Is this your Christianity ? Is
 this your Reason, and Religion, and Honesty ? Speak
 out your hearts in plain terms. No man would have
 kint to Christ, unless he were a Fool : no man would
 be holy, unless he were a Fool : no man would leave his
 lusts, and his pleasures, and his liberties, and his vanities
 unless he had first lost his wit : Or, at least, no wise man
 would

would take up more of Christianity, than the name, and the shell, and the shadow : none but a fool would make mere work for his soul, would go through with Christ and Christianity, would be an inward, hearty, resolved, universal, sincere Christian. Would any wise man put it out of doubt, that Christ is his ; put it out of doubt, that his soul is safe ; that he's passed from death to life, and shall never come into condemnation ? what do your brutish hearts or wayes speak less, or other than this ? Sinners, use this all the wisdom or honesty you have, thus to speak or think ? If it be, be it known unto you all, that these foolish Saints have more wit than to count the reproaches of such brutish spirits, to be any disparagment to them, or their profession ; and therefore if you will mock on, and go on to admire your selves, and the Oaks which you have chosen, and the Garden which you have desired, whilst you despise these and their wayes : but however, whilst they have this assurance, that God doth not count them what you call them ; that [You] will not call them *at last*, what you call them *now* ; you must give them leave (though they think never so meanly of themselves) yet, still to have the same high thoughts of their God, of their Gospel, of that holy profession and way that they have chosen.

Use. 1. Let the ungodly world hence learn to have a better opinion of these men, and to forbear reproaching them ; think with your selves upon what hath been said, these men may be wiser than we are aware of, they may be honest men ; we may be mistaken, these may be the Israel of God, those Nathaniels of whom Christ saith, John 1. 47. *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile*, these may be the little flock on whom it is the Fathers pleasure to bestow the Kingdom, these may be those little ones, whom whosoever offends, it were better that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the midst

of the Sea: And what if they should be so? in what case are you then, that have reproached and persecuted them? But I must be bold to tell, there's no *May be* in the matter. I question not, but if you would impartially weigh what hath been spoken, and what shall yet farther be spoken, you will see that if God hath any people in the World, these are they; and therefore my advice is, that you refrain from these men, and let them alone, lest, if you do go on, you be found fighters against God.

Obj. But where be any such? There be some that make a fair shew, and make specious pretences to the strictness of Religion, but they are Hypocrites and Deceivers, and these are they that we only speak against.

Sol. 1. Let this be granted, that such men as have been described (if) there be any such, are truly wise men; that men of such principles, that men of this profession (if) they be really what they profess, and live according to their principles, that these are men of wisdom; no, but grant that godliness is wisdom, and the fear of the Lord is understanding: I would that I could bring you thus far heartily to grant, that godliness hath an excellency in it, and that a life led according to those principles of godliness, which have been laid before you, is the most excellent life: Hence these two things will unavoidably follow. 1. That by how much more exactly and strictly any persons live according to the principles of godliness, by so much the more they have attained to true wisdom. If godliness be our wisdom and excellency, then by how much the more precisely godly any persons are, by so much the more wise and excellent; by how much the more precise a Christian or godly man is, by so much the more he is a Christian or a godly man; and therefore let never any man be blam'd for that he is so much, but that he is no more precise. 2. By how much the more loosely any persons live from the Rules of Religion, by how

much the more liberty they take to walk after the flesh, by so much the more foolish they are? and so you may without controversie conclude, that whatever these precise people be, you that are Libertines (to be sure) are *Fools*.

2. Are there none such? What, hath God no people in the World? hath the Devil gotten all? God hath a people somewhere, and a peculiar people, whom he hath chosen to salvation, whom he hath redeemed, and called and justified, and sanctified, and set apart for himself from the rest of the world. All are not *Israel*, all are not Disciples, but there are some whom God hath peculiarly set apart to himself from the rest of the men; and where are these to be found, if not among these precise walkers? The peculiar people of God are, as hath been sufficiently proved, an holy people, an hearing people, a praying people, a zealous people, a watchful, gainful, industrious, sober, meek, merciful, patient people, and all this in sincerity. Now where shall we look to find out such a people? Must we rake the kennels, and search the sinks of the earth? Must we seek in the Alehouses, or Taverns, or Play-houses? shall we take out the Drunkards and Riotous, the Swearers and Lyars, the Covetous and Oppressors, the vain ones of the Earth, the blind people, that brutish Generation that know not, nor mind not the Lord, or his wayes, and say of any of these, surely here they be, these are the people of God, here be the men that are no hypocrites, these are the *Royal Priesthood*, that holy Nation, that peculiar people whom God hath called to shew forth his praise before the World? Sinners, if you have so much reason or conscience, as to conclude that none of these are they, then tell us farther, who, or where they are? or else at last acknowledge, that if God hath a people any where, 'tis amongst those that you have reproached.

3. If you say there be Hypocrites among them, and these are they that you speak against, and not against those that are upright, let me give you this double advice.

1. Take heed you mistake not your mark: do not shoot at Saints indeed, under the name and disguise of *Hypocrites*; do not count that hypocrisie which God accounts sincerity; you may be mistaken (as I told you before) and what if you should be mistaken? what if it should prove, not only that the men which you reproach for *Hypocrites*, God should account sincere; but if the very thing which you call their hypocrisie, the Lord counts their excellency, what if it should be so? Then you have shot a fair shot; every reproach which you have thus cast out, it is as so much dirt which you have thrown into the face of God, so many darts which you have shot into the apple of Gods eye: You who are so free in reproaching Professors, take heed that it be not found, that the ground of all your evil language against them, and vile usage of them, be not for that they are, but for that they are not *Hypocrites*.

2. If they be *Hypocrites*, and only such that you speak against, take heed you mistake not your Arrow; do not cast that upon them for a reproach, which is good; do not take good names to reproach evil men. If they be *Hypocrites* any of them, and you know them to be such, call them *Hypocrites*; but do not take the name of Saint, or Precisian, or holy Brother, and put them as marks of disgrace and scorn upon them; he that calls a Saint *Hypocrite*, reproaches the Christian, he that in scorn calls an *Hypocrite* Saint, or holy Brother, reproaches Christianity it self.

Use 2. But I have yet a greater request unto you then, to have a good opinion of these men, and no longer to reproach them; my request to you further is, That you

will come in, and be of this number. Some of you it may be; will be ready to reply, *He shall have heard work that will persuade me to be a Precisian*; and truly I am affraid so too, if all that the Devil can do will hinder it; if all that your carnal reason and fleshly lusts can do, if all that your sinful companions can do will hinder it, I shall be sure enough not to prevail with you; yet know, that the motion which I make to you, is from the Lords and if you deny me, you therein deny him; and if you deny him, you must come upon it, ther's another day coming when he will deny you. You say, you will not be perswaded, but what is it you will not be perswaded to? Why this is it, you will not take the yoke of Christ upon you, you will not be advised, nor be ruled by him, so as to live as he would have you live, but you will have your liberty still to walk according to your own mind and heart, that is, you will not be Christians; Will you not? Are you in good earnest? Are you content that the Lord should take you at your Word, and for ever give you up to your hearts lust, and let you alone to walk in your own counsels? Are you content from henceforth to give up your hope in Christ? Are you content to be damned? Brethren, this is the choice you are put to, either an holy Life, or everlasting Death; either you must submit to the yoke of Christ, or you can have no benefit by the Cross of Christ; either you must kiss his golden Scepter, or be broken in pieces with his Rod of Iron; refuse to follow him in his Kingdom of Grace, and you thereby shut your selves out of the Kingdom of Glory; whereof, that I may the more effectually convince you, I shall yet further prove to you, both by Scripture and Reason that this strict and precise way of Life, is so undoubtedly and absolutely necessary to Salvation, that whosoever doth not thus walk, cannot escape the damnation of Hell.

I know carnal men are confident that they shall be sa-

ved without so much ado, and this is that which hardens them in their sins, their strong conceit that their way is not so strait and narrow as many would make them believe; they doubt not but they have found out a shorter and easier way then this; and what is this easier way? Why, 'tis but call upon God for mercy, keep the Church, do no way any wrong, be no Drunkard, no Swearer, nor Adulterer; or if thou be sometimes overtaken, ask God forgiveness, cry God mercy, and then hope well, never despair of Gods mercy, fear not, thou shalt be safe enough.

Now I shall make it plain to you, that this loose and easie way of Religion, will certainly leave every soul that goes no further, to perish everlastingly; and that this strict holy life, which hath been described, is indispensably necessary to salvation. Beloved, the matter that I am upon is weighty, a mistake in your Religion is mortal; if that which you have taken up for the way of life be not so, you are undone for ever; and that this your easie way is not it, I shall now make evident,

1. From Scripture: Let us but seriously examine and weigh those many high expressions which we find in Scripture, in the Commands, Exhortations, Instructions, Instances, Promises, and Prayers recorded in it, in all which, the one way of life is described, and then let any reasonable man judge, if all this amount to no more then that poor, and pittiful, and empty thing, which carnal men count their Religion.

1. For Scripture commands, consider these: Strive to enter in at the strait gate; looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling; not sloathful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Put off concerning the Conversation, the old man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts; and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness: Wash thine heart
from

from thine iniquities, that thou maist be saved: How long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee? Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but (speak ye) that which is good, to the use of edifying, that may minister grace to the hearers. Walk in love, love one another, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them which persecute you; render to no man evil for evil, but overcome evil with goodness. Mortifie your Members, which are upon the earth, walk in the Spirit, abstain from all appearance of evil; be watchful; stand with your loyns girded, and your lights burning.

2. For Scripture-instructions, consider these; The grace of God which bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live righteously, godly, and soberly in this present world: Pure Religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit, &c. and to keep himself unspotted of the World. They that be Christs, have Crucified the flesh with affections and lusts. He that is angry with his Brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment. He that looketh after a woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with her in his heart. Of every idle word men shall give an account at the day of Judgment. If any man seem to be religious, and bridleth not his Tongue, that mans Religion is vain.

3. For Scripture-instances. David is said to be a man after Gods own heart, and did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and turned not aside from any thing that the Lord hath commanded him all the dayes of his life, save only, &c. Of Josiah it is recorded, That his heart was tender, and perfect with the Lord his God, and that he turned not aside to the right hand, or to the left. Paul professeth that he served the Lord instantly, night and day; that forgetting those things which are behind, he reacheth forth to the things that are before, pressing to the mark, &c. The

life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God. To me to live is Christ, to die is gain. I so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air, but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest preaching to others, I my selfe should become a cast-away.

For Scripture promises, consider these: Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are the meek, the merciful, they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, the pure in heart, they that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for they shall see God, theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven, they shall be comforted, filled, and great is their reward in Heaven.

For Scripture-prayers, consider these: The God of peace sanctifie you wholly; and I pray God that your whole spirit, soul and body, may be preserved blameless untill the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now the God of peace make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight.

Multitudes of such like Scriptures might be added, but these may suffice. Now wherefore are all these things written? wherefore are all these strict commands given? these holy lives of Saints left upon Record, these Promises made, and these Prayers kept upon the File? are they not all written for our learning, to let every man and woman understand what manner of persons they must be, what manner of lives they must live, if they will be saved? If less or a lower Religion would serve, to what purpose is this waste? If it be so, People may forbear to charge Precisians with keeping more ado than needs, and lay in their charge against the Scriptures for requiring more than needs. But do you think indeed that the Scriptures have spoken these things in vain? If it be not in vain, if all this be comprehended under the one thing needful; if all this do but shew us the one and only way of life; if we must be thus renewed and changed in our minds, and must thus holily and unblameably order our
Lives,

Lives, or else we cannot be saved, as the Scriptures mentioned many of them expressly affirm; then what will become of that poor confident multitude we are now dealing with? Does all this amount to no more than keeping your Church, saying your Prayers, learning and saying over the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, living peaceably with your neighbours, paying every man his own, crying to God for mercy when you have committed a sin, and the like? Can you call this cold, lifeless way, your striving to enter in at the straight Gate? Is this your working out your Salvation with fear and trembling? Is this all that is meant by fighting the good fight of faith, by wrestling against flesh and blood, against principalities and powers, by being instant in prayer, fervent in spirit, watching and running, and pressing toward the mark? Brethren, if there be one way of Life, if all this which hath been represented to you out of the Scriptures, be to shew you from the Lord, what a strait way this one way of Life is; and if you will compare your way you depend upon with it, methinks you should need no more to convince you of your dangerous mistake hitherto, and to leave you more ready to embrace the Exhortation I am pressing upon you, namely, To come in among the number of, & take up the holy course of these circumspect Christians

But if this be not sufficient, I shall yet make it more evident by *Reasons* drawn from the Scripture, which I shall give you in these *six Propositions*.

1. The Gospel requires, as indispensably necessary to salvation, *inward holiness*, or the renewing of the heart, or inner men. Needs this any proof to them that understand the Scriptures? There must be *another spirit*, Num. 14. 24. *A new heart*, Ezek. 36. 26. *A clean heart*, Psal. 73. 1. *A true heart, or an upright heart, sprinkled from an evil Conscience*, Heb. 10. 22. Ezek. 18. 31. *Make you a new heart, and a new spirit, for why will ye die?* Jer. 4. 14. Oh

Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayst be saved. What do these Scriptures, especially the addition in the two last, *For why will ye die ? And [that thou mayst be saved.]* What do these import less than this, That there is no salvation possible, there is nothing but certain death and destruction, to those whose hearts are not washed and made new : *John 3. 3. Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* What is the product of this new birth, or this conversion, but a new creature ? Some there are, it is true, that interpret this Conversion, which is made so necessary to salvation, to be nothing else but the coming of persons from *Judaism, or Paganism, to Christianity,* to the owning and embracing the Christian Faith. But if this be true, then all that believe Christ to be the *Messiah,* and are baptized and live in the Profession of the Christian Faith, shall be saved ; Come ye Drunkards, come ye Adulterers, Lyars, Covetous, with all the profane Rout of Nominal Christians, and keep an Holy-day to the memory of these new Doctors, who bring you such a large and easie Gospel, as will carry you all to Heaven, with all your Lusts and Lewdness on your backs. But is this true ? Is this Gospel ? Is this all the Conversion that is necessary to salvation ? It cannot be : For,

First, There are many that embrace the Christian Faith, that are hypocrites ; and shall hypocrites be saved ?

Secondly, There are many such Converts that walk disorderly, *whose God is their belly, whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things,* Phil. 3. 18. of whom the Apostle here tells us, that *their end is destruction.*

2. This inward holiness which the Gospel requires, stands not in some sudden and unconstant good thoughts or some transient good affections. but is an *holy frame or habit* ; thus much is intimated in the forementioned expressions, *Another Spirit, a new Heart, a new Creature.*

An holy thought, a good desire, is another thing from a new heart ; they cannot so much as evidence, that the heart is renewed : as in a renewed heart there may be some evil thoughts, and evil lusts arising and working, so some good thoughts and affections may spring up in an evil heart ; true holiness is not a fit, but a frame ; there may be fits of passion, or of pride, or of envy (too often) in a Saint, and yet in the main he may be a Saint still : There may be fits of devotion, fits of zeal sometimes in a sinner, and yet he is a sinner still. Holiness is the temper and constitution of a Christian, his new nature that abideth in him.

3. This inward habitual Holiness stands in an universal compliance of the heart with the whole Will of God ; the heart that is formed after the Image of God, is conformed to the Will of God, *Psal. 40. Thy Law is within my Heart* ; not a piece, but the whole, every word and letter of it. *Thy Law is within me.* The Law is said to be within the heart of a Saint in a double sense :

First, It is published, and revealed, and made known to the heart, it is understood by the soul ; there is the light of the Word shining in every Christian.

Secondly, It is embraced, approved, consented to ; there is the love of the Law, in the heart of a Christian ; the heart closes with it, and all that it requires, as a good word, and worthy of all acceptance.

A Christian doth not only accept the Promises of the Gospel as good words, and comfortable words, but can heartily write, *Good is the Word of the Lord*, upon every precept ; he likes his duties as well as his privileges, his work as well as his reward : This towardliness of heart is set forth in those expressions of a willing mind, ready mind, a forward mind. And as his heart is towards his work, so it is for any work the Lord calls it to ; he hath respect to all the Commandments ; he would not be

be without one leaf, no not one line of the whole Word of God; he is *ready to every good work*; he would not have one duty abated to him of all that God hath required, he would not have one sin allowed to him of all that God hath forbidden him: He that says concerning any one word in the whole will of God, *This I must have struck out, or be dispensed with in it, ere I can be a Christian*, his heart is not upright: He that would have any one sin to be no sin, any one duty to be no duty, any one sin to be allowed him, or any one duty to be abated him, is no Christian.

4. This inward habitual Holiness is such as bears the sway, and hath the preheminance in the heart; though sin be there still, yet where there is true Grace, sin is an underling, and brought into captivity, it hath lost that power and interest which it had in the soul before, and the heart is now given up to God; the stream runs heavenward, the stream of the thoughts, the stream of the affections run that way; God and the way of holiness hath a greater share, and a greater power in the heart than all the World; there is more love to God, stronger resolutions for following God, than can be ballanced by the highest interest of the flesh. God and the World stand as to Suiters for the Heart, but God carries it from the world; so that as before it followed the World with the neglect of God, now it will follow God with the neglect of the World; before it would, it may be in the mind God and godliness, as far as it could without prejudice to its worldly interest, so far as it could with honour, or ease, or safety; but now it will mind the world and its fleshly interest, so far only as is consistent with godliness and a good Conscience: this is sincerity, and the clearest and most certain evidence of it. Can we imagine that we love God sincerely, when we love the World better? when we love our ease, or credit, or pleasures

pleasures, or carnal friends better ? When these can do more with us, and command us farther than God and glorie: *Mat. 10. 37. He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me. Luk. 14. 33. Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my Disciple.*

If there be any certain unquestionable Truths in the whole Doctrine of the Gospel, this is one of them, That whosoever hath saving grace, hath more love to God & holiness, than to all things else whatsoever. Though it be controverted, Whether common grace and saving grace do not differ more than in degree, yet this is without controversie, That saving grace doth contain in it a higher degree of love to God, than to all things else.

5. This inward, habitual, prevailing holiness, wherever it is, will infallibly bring forth this strict, precise, and holy life: For,

First, that holiness in the heart will bring forth holiness of life, is as naturally certain, as that he that hath the Life and Reason of a man, will act as a man; as that a root will bring forth such branches and fruit as partake of the kind and nature of the Root; as that a Fig-tree will bring forth figs, that an olive-tree will bring forth olives. Secondly, It is as certain, that according to the proportion of holiness in the heart, such will be the proportion of it in the Life; if holiness bear the sway in the heart, it will bear the rule in the Life; if that little good that is in the heart, be held as an underling in the soul, thereafter will the life be; this is as certain, as that the soul governs the body.

Thirdly, It's no less certain, that the lowest degree of prevailing holiness in the heart, will bring forth this precise holy life, in the sense I have described it: that is, though there be not perfect holiness brought forth; though he that hath a lower degree of true grace, falls much shorter of that perfection, than he that hath an higher

higher degree; though there be many failings, and wanderings, and weaknesſes, and turnings aſide to iniquity through corruption and temptation, yet thus far the loweſt of Saints have arrived; That his aims, deſires, endeavours, are after a perfectly holy Life; he hath a reſpect to every Commandment, to every duty; he doth not habitually allow himſelf in any iniquity; there is ſome change in his courſe actually appearing, and this he purpoſes to himſelf, and ſets his heart upon it, to grow daily to a more thorow and univerſal conformity to all the principles of godlineſs laid down before him in the Scriptures, and made manifeſt in his Conſcience.

This is as certain as the two former, He that is ſincere would be perfect. In the true love of holineſs, is neceſſarily included a love and longing for it in the perfection of it. He that loveth holineſs for it ſelf, will love it moſt when it is moſt it ſelf, in its perfection; and love and longing, will infallibly bring forth labouring, and following after. Therefore,

6. Whoſoever is not truly a perſon of a precise life, is certainly in the ſtate of damnation: This ſo clearly follows from the former propoſitions, that it needs no further proof. He that is not inwardly, habitually, univerſally ſanctified? he that loves any thing more than God or godlineſs, that is, he is not converted and new born, and ſo become a new creature, is actually in the ſtate of damnation; and he who is not a precise walker, is not thus converted, new-born, or ſanctified; for whoever hath made this new creature, will infallibly make it appear (as hath been proved) by this newneſs of life.

You ſee, Beloved, to what iſſue this matter is brought, either you muſt take up this ſtrict way of holineſs, or be reprobates from God. Whoſoever there be amongſt you that have the moſt rooted enmity in your hearts againſt this holineſs of life, and have caſt the greateſt ſlight and

contempt on it, and those that thus live, and, as *Michael* and *David*, to despise them in your hearts ; whoever among you are most peremptorily resolved againstarkning to any farther Treaties about this thing, casting them off with the greatest scorn and indignation, I must be bold to tell you from God, That if you live and die in this mind, God must cease to be true, the Scriptures must be proved to be a Lie, the Doctrine of the Gospel a meer forgery or falshood, or you will be shut for ever out of the Kingdom of God.

And yet do you not yet see enough to perswade you to come in and be of this number ? Are you not yet convinced that 'tis your duty, that 'twill be your wisdom to be such ? That none but Fools and Brutes will continue to be Libertines ? Whilst you charge folly on the Saints, will you at last prove your selves to be the only Fools ; and will you verifie that Proverb, *Bray a Fool in a Mortar, and yet his folly will not depart from him* ? Shall it be said of you, Let them be instructed, let them be convinced, let them be warned, yet still all's one, fools they are, and fools they will be : Oh ye fools, when will ye be wise ? Search the Scriptures and learn of them ; come to Christ and learn of him ; and if he do not speak the same things which here hath been spoken, if he do not teach you the same Lesson which here you have been taught, then go on, and take your liberty still ; if Christ says, Be holy ; if Christ says, Be circumcised ; if Christ says, Be perfect, and you still refuse toarken, then carry this Inscription upon your Foreheads, *We have rejected the Word of the Lord, and what wisdom is there in us* ?

John 1. 47. *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile.*

WE need not go far back to find out the sense of these words, which they fully enough contain within themselves. The occasion of them was this, *Philip* calls *Nathaniel* to come to Christ; *Nathaniel* being called, comes; and coming to Christ, our Lord gives his judgment of him.

In the words we have, 1. A note of Observation, *Behold!* this hints us two things; 1. That a *Nathaniel*, true *Israelite*, is a *worthy sight*, worth the observing *Behold an Israelite.* 2. That a *Nathaniel* is a *rare sight*. We do not use to put a *Behold* on that which we see every day.

2. A Description of *Nathaniel*, and in him, of a sincere godly man. 1. He is an *Israelite*. *Israel* was first the name of *Jacob*, who upon his wrestling, and as a Prince prevailing with God in Prayer, had this new name given him of God, and was thenceforth called *Israel*; from him afterwards, the whole generation of the *Jews* were called *Israel*; in the New Testament, all the people of God were called *Israel*, *Gal. 6. 16.* Both in the Old Testament and the New. *Israelites* were such as had the account of the people of God, whom God hath separated and set apart for himself, as his peculiar people, out of all the rest of the World: so that an *Israelite* here, notes *one that belongs to God, a good Man.*

2. An *Israelite*; *Ἀληθῆς*, one that's truly an *Israelite*, not after the flesh, but after the spirit; not in shew and appearance, not in conceit, or his own or others opinions, but in reality.

3. *An Israelite without deceit, in whom is no guile:* who is no Jugler, or crafty dissembler, that did only personate, bear the face, and act the part of an *Israelite*, but an honest, down-right, plain-hearted *Israelite*.

In all this we have a full description of a sincere godly man; he is an *Israelite*, one separated to God; an *Israelite* indeed; not in conceit or fanſie, but in truth; not in deceit or guile, but in ſingleness of heart.

That which I intend for the foundation, on which to build my discourse, is, *An Israelite indeed*. Thence let the Doctrine be,

Doctr. A sincere godly man is no Phanatick; or, Godliness is no fanſie. As there is an *Israelite* in conceit, so there is an *Israelite* indeed; as there is Godliness in shew, so there is godliness in truth; Godliness is no fanſie.

The great design of Satan and his Instruments is against *Godliness*, to resist it, disgrace it, and if it were possible, to root it out from under Heaven. And because whilst *Godliness* appears to be, what indeed it is, in its own lustre, glory, and excellency, all such attempts against it, are like to be vain and ineffectual: therefore the plot is, to cast a mist before the eyes of this Pur-blind World, and to make them believe, that there is no such thing, or that it is not what it is; that 'tis a *meer fanſie*, there is nothing in it: That which men call *Godliness*, is but a conceit, a *meer dream* of some brain-sick persons, who thinking themselves wiser and holier than the rest of the World, and being strongly opinionated of their ways, and entoxicated with their own imaginations, whilst they would perswade others that they are in the right, and under strong delusions, are most of all mistaken and deluded themselves.

Now, because this is such a mischievous Engine to hinder the propagation of the Gospel, and to hold men back

back from that true godliness which is necessary to salvation, and without which they perish everlastingly : shall through the grace of God, prove and make as evident as the light, the truth of the Doctrine proposed. That *Godliness is no fanfie*, and that the sincerest and strictest godly men, are most unjust and unreasonable termed *Phanaticks*, of any persons in the world. By *Godliness*, I mean that sincere and strict profession and practise of Religion, which is above the size, and beyond the measure of the common sort of people, who call themselves Christians ; that which the Scripture calls *pure Religion, the power of Godliness, walking with God, walking in the Spirit, living in all good conscience.*

By a *sincere godly man* accordingly, I understand the same persons which I in the fore-going Discourse mean by a *precise or circumspect Christian* ; one that will not adventure his soul on that cheap, easie, outward, careless way of Religion, which the most do, but labours to make sure and thorow work, by setting himself to live up to the height and exactness of those Principles of Religion which he hath received from the Scripture.

When I say, That *Godliness is no fanfie* ; by a *Fanfie* I mean, that which hath no being, but in the imagination ; that which hath no foundation in the Scriptures, but is a meer conceit or airy *Nation*, a figment of mens own brains. This is the reproach that the prophane world cast upon strict godliness, That it is a meer fiction, or dream of mens own hearts ; that the inward likeness to God, the exact walking with God, living in fellowship and communion with God, the joy of God, the life of Faith, the souls exercising it self upon God, and the Love to Jesus, and the like, are meer conceits, there are no such things, but they are mens own dreams and delusions.

Now this is that which I shall prove and make good to you, That this godliness, in its greatest purity, precise

ness, and spirituality, is not such an empty thing, but is fully and really that which it asserts it self to be, and hath clear foundations in, and an evident conformity to that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, revealed in the Scriptures.

The proofs which I shall bring in, shall be such as have respect to the special parts of it; where I shall make it manifest:

1. That the Doctrines and Principles of Godliness are *real Truths*.

2. That the Duties and comforts of Godliness are *real Duties and Comforts*.

1. That the Doctrines and Principles of Godliness are *real Truths*. Wisdom hath her pillars: Godliness is not a Castle in the air, but is a Building which hath foundations, *Heb. 6. 1*. I shall instance in some of the chief of these principles, and shew you:

1. Concerning the *Being of God and his Holiness*: That this is a certain truth, that *there is a God, and that he is an holy God, and a friend to holiness*: If there be any real and evident truth in the world, this is a truth, that *there is a God: Aut Deus est, aut nihil est*, Either there is a God, or there is nothing: We may as well say, when we see the Sun, and the Moon, and Stars, and the motions of them; when we see the Earth, and the several Creatures upon it; when we see our selves, Men and Women, walking up and down thereon, that all this is but a conceit, that our eyes deceive us, that our selves, and all the things we see, are but phantasms, and apparitions, as we may question *whether there be a God, Rom. 1. 20*. The invisible things of him from the Creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and God-head. And to question whether God be an holy God, is the same in effect, as to question whether there be a God; to conceive,

ceive, that *there is a God without holiness*, is to imagine that *there is a God that is no God*: Sin is such a defect and imperfection, as is utterly inconsistent with such an infinite perfect Being. And to question whether God be a friend to holiness, is to question whether he be a friend to himself.

Atheism, whatever the foolish World ignorantly talks is the greatest and most notorious *Phanaticism*, *Psal. 14. 1. The Fool says in his heart there is no God*, he fancies there is not; and *Prophaneness* that causes men to conceive of God as not so holy and righteous as he is, is next to *Atheism*, *Psal. 50. 21. These things thou hast done, and kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such one as thy self; but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. These things thou hast done; thou hast done wickedly, hast been a Lyar, a Slanderer, a Drunkard, a partaker with Adulterers, And I kept silence, I let thee alone, and did not presently testify my dislike or displeasure against thee; hereupon thou conceitedst, because thou wert let alone in thy sin, and didst not presently smart for it, That I liked it well enough, and was altogether such a one as thy self, That thou hadst a God after thine own heart, after thine own soul, that was never the less a friend to thee, for that thou wert so great a friend to thy lusts and wickedness: Thou thoughtest this, sure a foolish conceit thou hadst in thy heart; I, but it was but a conceit; I will make thee know, that I am another manner of God then thou vainly imaginest; I will have my time for thee, when I shall reprove thee for all thy wickedness, and convince thee of thy folly, and set all thy sins in order before thee.*

Sinners you that either think that there is no God or because he keeps silence, lets you alone in your sin lets you flourish and prosper in your wickedness, thereupon conclude, He is a Friend, one that favours loose

and ungodliness; he will have his time for you, to convince you, and reprove you out of these vain conceits, and make you know that he hates and detests both you and your wayes; and that he loves that holiness, and is friend to those holy ones, which for a time he may suffer you to despise and trample upon, *Rev. 3. 9. Behold, I will make them of the Synagogue of Satan (which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lye) behold, I will make them to come and worship at thy feet, and to know that I have loved them.* You will not now be perswaded, but God will make you know whether you will or not, that these are they whom he hath loved: Please your selves with your own wayes, and bless your selves in your own hearts while you will; continue your confidence, that God is no such enemy to you, that he is not so hard and severe against ungodliness as men speak; that God is a friend to ignorance, Formality, Licentiousness, and counts such his best subjects: And as for those which make such a talk, and such a shew, and keep so much ado about holiness and strictness, make your selves believe that God is much against them as you; and that he doth not like that men should be so fearful of sin, and watchful against sin, and zealous for holiness; that he likes those best that will take their ease, and their liberty, and their pleasure: Let know, that God will have his time for you, to make you out of another mind, when he shall come to reckon with you, to reprove you, and set your sins in order before you.

2. The Doctrines concerning Sin, are certain Truths: I shall mention but these four:

1. That Man is a sinner.

2. That Sin is the greatest of evils.

3. That Spiritual Sins are the greatest of sins.

4. That Sin is the Root of all misery.

1. That Man is a Sinner: A sinner by nature, a sinner

ner by practice ; in a *sinful state*, 1 Joh. 5. 10. *The whole world lyeth in wickedness.* Running on in a *sinful course*, Psal. 14. *They are all gone out of the way ; that is, he is universally sinful ;* this fowre Leaven hath leavened the whole lump ; every part of man, head, heart, hands, and inside, outside, all are full of wounds and bruises, and purifying sores, Isa. 1. 6. That man is a great sinner, Jer. 17. 9. *The heart of man is desperately wicked ;* it is become like those bad figs which Jeremiah speaks of, those that were good were very good, and those that were bad were very bad, Psal. 5. 9. *Their inward part is very wickedness.* 'Tis expressed in the abstract, not *wicked*, but *wickedness*, and in the plural number, *wickednesses*. There is a complication of all sorts of wickedness, and sin is so rooted and (as it were) incorporated into the hearts of men, as if their natures were even transubstantiated into a mass of corruption. Is all this but conceit ? Gen. 6. 5. *God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the Earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually : [God saw] ;* Gods eye cannot be deceived, men may think they see what they see not, and may not see what is before their eyes ; but can Gods eye fail him ?

2. *That Sin is the greatest of evils :* The Apostle to set forth the formidable appearance that sin had by the Law, expresses it thus, Rom. 7. 13. *That sin might appear to be sin :* He could find out nothing more evil and odious to express it by, then it self. If he had said, that sin might appear to be a Snare or a Serpent, a Viper, a Devil, an Hell, that had been much, but yet not enough to set forth this evil of evils : Sin never is seen in its perfect odiousness, but when it shews its own naked face, and looks like it self: We can never know how great an evil sin is, till we know how good the Lord is, how precious Christ is, how precious the soul of man is ; to all which sin is so contra-

ry and destructive, *Rom. 8. 7.* It is said to be *enmity against God*; God hath no enemy in the world but Sin, and those whom Sin hath made him. Sin hath set all the Earth against the God of Glory. From this enmity which Sin hath filled the hearts of men with, arise all their rebellions against his Word and Government, all their unwillingness and averfeness from his wayes, their weariness of his service, their frowardness, murmurings, impatencies, frettings, and insurrections of heart against his dispensations and providence. The unruliness and stubbornness of the will of men, the distemper and disorders of their passions and affections, the vanity, vileness and confusion of their thoughts, the defilement and deadness of their consciences, the ebullition of so many hellish Lusts, setting mens hearts upon all mischief: Whence is all this, but from sin that dwells in them?

Sin hath made men very *Devils*, set upon all manner of mischief. *Devils against God*, hating, reproaching, blaspheming, cursing, fighting against God; there should quickly be no God, nor Heaven, nor Being left, if the wickedness of mans heart had power answerable to its malice. *Devils against themselves*, set upon the destruction and damnation of their own souls, there needed not another Devil to tempt and devour them; if God should but let them alone, they would quickly make their destruction sure of themselves. *Devils one against another*, There is not one Sinner, but if God should pull up the sluices, and let his wickedness have its full course, would do his utmost to damn all the World, enemies, friends, husbands, wives, children, all should be destroyed.

And can there now be a greater evil then this imagined? I, you will say, if all this be true, it is a great evil indeed: But may be, for all these great words, there may be no such great matter in it. Why, do but consider what sin hath done, and cannot be denied, and then you will

see reason to believe all that hath been said : Go to Mount *Calvary*, and see what it hath done there ; What was it that slew the Lord of glory, that put Christ to death ? Was it not those sins that were laid upon him ? These were his *betrayers and murderers* ; These were the thorns, the nails, the speare that wounded him, the gall and vinegar that was given him to drink : Let the sweat, the cries, the groans, the blood, the soul, that were pressed and poured out by sin, let these speak if too much hath been said.

Turn aside from Mount *Calvary*, and go down to the *Valley of Hinnon*, lay your ear to the mouth of *Tophet*, and hearken what work sin hath done there : What is it that hath filled Hell so full already, that hath sent down *Cain* and *Judas*, *Ananias* and *Saphyra*, with those millions of damned souls that are already tormented in those flames ? Did God damn so many souls for *nothing*, or for a trifle, inflict so great a torment for a small offence ? What is it hath cast them in thither ? Was it their righteousness ? Was it not their iniquities ? If you could step down into those Chambers of Death, and ask those wretched creatures, *Friends, how came you in hither ?* What would they answer ? *Oh it is our sins that brought us into this place of torment* : Oh ! it was my Covetousness brought me hither, would one say : Oh ! it was my lying brought me hither, says another : Oh ! it was my pride, or my passion, or my wantonness, or my sloathfulness, that brought me hither, says a third ? Oh sin, sin ! this is it for which we burn, we roar, we rave, we die eternally. Can there be too much said of the evil of sin, that hath done all this mischief ?

3. *Spiritual sins are the greatest of sins : Soul pollutions are the most foul pollutions.*

By how much the more excellent the soul is above the body in its nature, by so much the more vile and mischief-

vous,

vous, being depraved with sin ? The soul of man is the *prime subject of the image of God* in man ; there was much of God to be seen in the body, or externals of man, but the face of God, the glory of God, was stamped upon his soul ; the soul being corrupted, it *became the express image of the Devil* : Satan is rudely limb'd, and some darker shadows of him drawn on the outward man, but he is drawn out to the life in the soul ; the very face, the heart of Satan, his pride, malice, envy, falshood, is engraven on the heart : A proud heart hath more of the Devil than a proud look ; a wanton heart is more vile than a wanton eye, a murderous or adulterous heart is worse than a murderous or adulterous act. It is true, when sin is committed without, it is worse than when it sleeps in its causes within ; and sin in its birth, is worse than in its bare conception ; and the reason is, because when sin is committed, there are both parts, the outward and the spiritual together ; there is the sin of the hand, and the sin of the heart too, to make up the murder : But then, if you should distinctly consider, that which the *Hand* hath done towards the murder, and that which the *Heart* hath done, the hearts part would appear to be incomparably the worst : The sins of the heart are the *root sins*, the spring that sets all the wheels a going, the Fountain that sets all the streams a running, the fire that sets the Furnace a smoking : Carnal men make little of outward sins, nothing of spiritual. If they would not be extortioners, or oppressors, or swearers, or cursers, some of them, yet evil thoughts may lodge in them, Lust may bear the rule in them. Pride, Envy, Ignorance, Atheism, Heart-Blasphemy, these are scarcely accounted evils ; What are Thoughts, a little inward discontent, anger, and the like, that we should trouble our selves with these ? Oh ! You do not know what there may be in a Thought, or a secret lust ; there may be a thousand evil

words and actions, in the bowels of a few evil thoughts; Lusts are big-bellied, a world of monstrous births are continually springing forth from them : Beloved, if you should examine the wickedness of your lives, Drunkenness, Whoredoms, Lying, Oaths, Perjuries, and ask them one by one, Drunkenness, whence art thou ? Adultery, whence comest thou ? Oaths, Curses, Lies, whence are all ye ? Would they not answer with the Apostle, *Come we not hence, even from those lusts that war in your members ?* Blame not Christians that they are so much afraid of their own hearts, that they take so much pains, spend so much time, about purging and washing, and watching these, keeping their thoughts, governing their passions, mortifying their lusts ; if they do not, they know what there is within them. He that makes nothing of an evil thought, the Devil is like to bring him to something in a little time.

4. *Sin is the root of all misery* ; the miseries of this Life, of all the diseases, pains, torments, tumults, commotions, quarrellings, contentions, murders, rapines, oppressions, wars, famine, poverty, pestilence, and all sorts of calamities that this world groans under, *Jer. 2 17. Hast thou not procured all these things to thy self ?* that is, by thine iniquities : what a world had this world been, had it not been for sin ? A Paradise, all the earth had been as the garden of the Lord. How great peace had there been, had it not been for this *make-bate* ? How great joy, had it not been for this *Tormenter* ! How great beauty, and order, had it not been for this, which is the deformity and confusion of all things ! What a World is this become by sin : how full of violence ! What Lyons, Tygers, Wolves, are the inhabitants thereof become one to another ! What thorns and briars are they, scratching and tearing one another ! What lying and flandering, and defaming, and defrauding, and quarrelling, and fighting

are

are there broken forth; this earth is even almost become an Hell ! whence is all this? the Apostle tells us, *Jam. 4. 1. From whence come Wars, and fighting among you? Come they not hence, even from your lusts that warr in your members?* Sinners lay the blame of all upon righteousness and holiness, and the knowledge of God and Conscience, and on such persons as exercise themselves in keeping a good Conscience, and walking holily, and working righteousness: These are the troublers, these are the disturbers, these are the fire-brands that set all in a combustion, though they little think what it is that herein they say. To impute the troubles of the Earth to Righteousness and holiness, &c. To affirm, as many do, it had been a better world if it had not been for so much preaching and praying, and professing, and keeping such ado about conscience, and the like, is all one as to say, It had been a better world, if *God had not been in fault*; we may thank *God and his Law*; we may thank *Christ and his Gospel* for all our troubles. But let such Blasphemers know, that 'tis themselves and their wicked hearts, their Atheism and Ignorance, their Idolatries and Adulteries, their Pride and their Covetousness, their Lewdness and Licentiousness, that they owe all their troubles and miseries to, *Lam. 1. Jerusalem hath sinned, therefore is she removed; her adversaries are the chief, her enemies prosper, her filthiness is yet in her skirts. Job. 8. 11. Can a Rush grow without mire?*

Now from all this it evidently follows, 1. That no sin can properly be called little. 2. That the Saints mourning for sin, praying, watching, fearing, shunning sin, with its occasions, temptations, and very appearances, are not phanatical, but reasonable services.

Notwithstanding all this evil that is in sin, this is it which carnal men make matter of nothing; *Tis every mans case*, we are all sinners, and why should we trouble ourselves;

selves at that which they cannot help? And what a wonder do they make at poor Saints, that they are so faithful, and so watchful, and so tender, and so much troubled when they fall into sin, counting their fear their folly, and their mourning madness, as if it were a meer Scare-crow, or a Bug-bear, or as if it were nothing but their own melancholick fancies that they thus trouble themselves about? what is it that you are afraid of? why can you not be so free, and take your liberty as well as others? what hurt is there in a little mirth, in a little freedom, to live as other men do? Oh sinners, if *Samuels* Mantle were taken off from this Devils back, and the vail were taken off from your eyes; if you did but see sin as it is, you would cease your wondring.

Is sin nothing? is enmity against God, his Government, his Being, nothing? Are the fruits of sin nothing? Is poverty nothing? Is sword, and famine, and pestilence nothing? Are all the bodily diseases that come upon you, and the torment of them: Is the Gout, and the Stone, and the Strangury, and the pains of Child-bearing nothing? Are Death and Hell, and the vengeance of eternal fire, such slight matters? Is the fruit so bitter and deadly, and do you think there is so little hurt in the root? You may as well count these torments, which sin hath brought upon the World, to be conceits or slight matters, as have such thoughts of sin.

Whosoever makes nothing of sin, makes slight of Christ; whoever fears not, feels not, flies not, mourns not for sin, as the most dreadful of evils, regards not God, nor his own soul. He that hath so much wit as to dispute sin into a trifle, hath yet but little understanding, and less Religion; He that conceits that a cold (*God forgive me*) will make him whole of his inward Diseases, or a slight (*I cry God mercy*) will make amends for his actual wickedness; if he prove not himself a Phanatick

in the end, let the most circumspect Christians pass for Phanaticks now.

Sinners, if you will not yet be convinced, if the Scriptures do not convince you, if your eyes and ears do not teach you to understand sin better, take heed lest God teach you hereafter, as *Gideon* taught the men of *Succoth*, with bryars and thorns, with fire and brimstone, and fetch his proof from your bones, and from your bowels, and cause the revenging worm, when your pangs shall come upon you, to bring back the memory of your slighted sins upon you thus: *Now sinner, now wretch, what thinkest thou of thy lust now; of thy pride and thy jollity, and thy covetousness now? Where are thy slight thoughts of all this now? Where's thy vain confidence now, that thou shouldest go out with all this well enough, that thou shouldest escape well enough, that all the threatnings and woes denounced against thee, would come to nothing? Now sinner learn, and be learning this Lesson for ever, what a fool thou hast been in the midst of all thy high conceits and boastings of thy wisdom.*

3. The Doctrine of Redemption is a real Truth: Need I prove this? That *Christ is true*, the true Messiah, true God, and true Man; had a true body, and a true soul; That *his sayings are true*, He was a true Prophet; That *his sufferings were true*, He was a true Priest; That as he was truly dead, so he as truly rose, ascended, and is the Lord both of the dead and of the living, and is a true King: That he hath truly and fully accomplished his whole undertaking. Am I speaking to *Jews* or *Pagans*, that I need prove this? Am I not speaking to *Christians*, who must prove themselves Liars their profession a Lie, and their faith vain, if they deny these things? But wherefore was all this? What came Christ into the world for? wherefore was he born? wherefore did he live, die, rise, ascend? what was the intent of all this? why, it

was, to make a total and blessed change upon the miserable condition of whomsoever of this sinful world shall embrace and give entertainment to him; 'twas to make this old world new, this crooked world strait, this miserable world blessed; 'Twas to bring deliverance to the Captives, and the opening the Prison to them that are bound, Isa. 61. 1. *To make an end of sin, to finish transgression, and to bring in everlasting righteousness*, Dan. 9. 24. 'Twas to undo all that mischief which sin and the Devil hath wrought and brought upon this world, 1 John 3. 8. *For this cause the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil*. 'Twas to abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light. 'Twas to redeem from all iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Tit. 2. 14. 'Twas, that being delivered from our enemies, we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the dayes of our lives, Luk. 1. 74, 75. *That they who live, should not henceforth live to themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again*, 2 Cor. 5. 15. Hereupon sayes the Apostle, Tit. 2. 11, 12. *The grace of God which bringeth Salvation, teacheth us, that denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live righteously, soberly, and godly in this present world*. And lastly, to redeem us, 1 Pet. 1. 4. *To an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in Heaven for us*.

1. *To an inheritance*. Christians are not brought out of Egypt, and redeemed from their house of bondage, and then left to shift for themselves, or to perish in the Wilderness; they are redeemed to an inheritance, they are a purchased people, and there is for them a purchased possession. 2. *An incorruptible and undefiled inheritance*; an enduring possession, and an holy habitation. Holiness is a great part of the blessedness of the Saints. Sinners, you that despise holiness, despise one of the richest Jewels in the Crown of glory. 3. *Reserved in Heaven*; there's

the good Land, where their inheritance lies, that's the Country which Christ hath purchased for his ransomed ones; *The whole Land is theirs, theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

This is that Redemption which by the Gospel is preached unto you; and if Christ had failed of performing and accomplishing of any of all this, he had been but an incompleat and imperfect Redeemer.

By the way, learn what great Reason there is, that the Gospel should have better entertainment, then for the most part it meets with in the World; one would think, who considers what entertainment it hath, and the Ministry of it, that were some dismal word, and a dreadful errand that it came upon; if Christ had come to destroy the world, could he have less welcome? If the Gospel were as the Law, not only a dead, but a killing Letter, a *Ministration of Death and Condemnation*: If the Ministers of the Gospel had been Messengers sent up from the bottemless Pit, to *deceive the Nations*, to destroy souls, to drag them down to everlasting darkness, there could hardly have been a greater hate and out-cry, then there is against it and them. Surely such a message, and such messengers, deserve better welcome, and better usuage.

But to our purpose; you have heard what that Redemption is, which the Gospel brings us: Now doth Christ do his work by halves? Deliver out of Prison, and leave his ransomed Ones in their vile Prison-garments; change their Relation, and never change their conditions; Redeem them from death, and not redeem them from iniquity? Was this the intent of Christ in dying for sinners, that they might play the Beasts, and the Rebels more securely? Did this grace abound, that sin might super-abound? Doth the Law of Faith, make void the Law of Righteousness; Doth it not establish it?

it? What's the import of those several expressions fore-mentioned, *That he might redeem from all iniquity, and purifie a peculiar people, zealous of good works; that we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness; that they that live, should not live to themselves, but to him that died for them; that denying all ungodliness, &c.* Is not all this included in the Redemption which Christ hath wrought? And what doth all this import, other then that godliness we are pleading for? Is this a part of that which Christ hath redeemed us to, and is there nothing in it? Hath Christ sweat, and groaned, and laboured, and travelled in pain, and all this to bring forth a lie? Hath he died to purge, and purifie, and wash, and cleanse his people, & when all comes to all, it is nothing but a cheat? Did Christ die but in conceit, and ascend but in conceit? As certain as it is that Christ did not barely personate a Redeemer, so certain this is, that his Redeemer do not barely personate Saints. Let all the world be Judges, what honour those persons have for Christ, that have no better opinion of the fruits of his death. Hence it appears,

1. That the Redemption of a sinner, is the destruction of sin; Christ died to save men from their sins, not in them; to redeem from all iniquity, as well as from wrath.

2. That Redemption and Regeneration are linked together: He that is brought from being a slave, is born a son; he that is not partaker of the renewing of the holy Ghost, is not partaker of the Redemption of Christ.

The Doctrine of Redemption by Christ is abused by wilful sinners, and made to serve as their great plea against the necessity of Holiness: Convince them of sin, of the necessity of turning, of the danger of continuing, and going on, here they presently take Sanctuary, *Christ died for sinners; and here they think them-*

selves

selves sufficiently secured, not only against all the threatenings of wrath, but against all exhortations to holiness: Argue with them from the command of God, *This is the Will of God, even your Sanctification: cast away your transgressions, why will you die? turn and live:* From the threatenings of God, *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die,* &c. Yet this they think will answer all your arguments, Christ died for sinners, I put my trust in Christ, that I shall be saved. What? trust in Christ, and not turn to Christ? hope to be saved by Christ, and refuse to be sanctified? Will Christ redeem those from the curse, who will not be redeemed from iniquity? *Jer. 7. 9. Will ye steal, and murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, &c. and come and stand before me in my house, and say, we are delivered to do all these abominations? Will you do wickedly, walk in all manner of wantonness, lasciviousness, lust, excesses? &c. and then come and take hold of a Redeemer, as if you were delivered to do all this wickedness: Is my house become a Den of Robbers? Are the Redeemed of the Lord a generation of Rebels, enemies of all Righteousness, Liars, Proud, Covetous, Blasphemers? Are these the followers of the Lamb? 'Tis true, the Apostle says, Such were some of you, 1 Cor. 6. 11. Yet he adds, But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Christianity without godliness, this is a fanstie indeed: Let everyone that nameth the Lord Jesus depart from iniquity; either turn from iniquity, or talk no more of Christianity: A Christian and an Infidel, are not more *Ἀνομα*, then a Christian and a Libertine: Take heed sinners, and let not the Gospel undo you, let not mercy damn you: put not your faith to do the sad office of Infidelity. Beloved, let it never be said, while the *Just live*, you must die by your faith; this is like to be your case; you would never have
 dared*

dared so to have slighted holiness, and persisted in sin had it not been for your trust in Christ. You must count Christ to be no Christ, no Redeemer, or but an half, or deceitful Redeemer, if you count your selves good Christians while you are yet in your sins. You must have another Christ, another Gospel, ere ever you can be saved in your sinful state, *Rom. 8. 1. There is no condemnation to them which are in Jesus Christ, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit*: This is the Gospel, wherein you have the Redeemeds Charter, *He shall not come into condemnation, his character, he walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*; that is, he is a man of a godly life. Whom doth the Gospel secure from condemnation? why, those that are in Christ: But who are they? Why only those that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; those that walk otherwise, can have no benefit by the Gospel. You all stand as convicted Malefactor guilty of death; you have sinned, and what have you to say, why you should not die, and have your sentence of condemnation past upon you? May be you will call for a *Psalm of Mercy, my Book, Lord, my Book*, the Gospel will, I hope, secure me. No sinner, thou canst not have it, thou art one that *livest after the flesh*, and canst not have the benefit of the Gospel. This is the Law and the Gospel sayes not one word to reverse it; *ye live after the flesh, ye shall die*. Christ never intended the benefit of his Redemption to any of you, whether you would repent or no, be holy or no; you may as well write for Gospel this, *He that believeth shall be damned*, as this, *He that obeyeth not the Gospel shall be saved*: And you may as well say, that *sinning is serving of Christ*, as that, *those that live after the flesh, obey the Gospel*.

4. The doctrine of Regeneration is a real Truth: There are three things most evident concerning this: The

1. That there is such a change, and that necessary to salvation.

2. That this is a great and mighty change.

3. That this is an inward and soul-change.

1. That there is such a grace as Regeneration, and that necessary to salvation, *Joh. 3. 3. Verily, verily, or truly, or certainly, except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.*

2. That the change that is wrought by Regeneration is a great and a mighty change ; it is as great as the making something of nothing : Regeneration is a *new Creation* ; it is as great as the raising up of persons from death to life. Regeneration is a *Resurrection* : *You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. 2. 1.* There is as great a power, as much of Divinity manifested in quickning a dead soul, as in raising a dead body. When God would confirm the faith of the *Jews* concerning their Conversion and Restauration, after their cutting off, which the Apostle tells us shall be as *life from the dead* ; he evidences that he was able to accomplish it by his making dry bones to live, *Ezek. 37. 3. Can these bones live ? Son of man, prophesie unto these bones, say unto them, Ob ye dry bones, hear the Word of the Lord : 'Twas a strange service the Prophet was put upon, but yet he prophesies ; and behold there was a great shaking, and bone came to his bone, and they were covered with sinews, and with flesh, and the breath of life was breathed into them, and they stood upon their feet a great Army : These bones, saith the Lord, are the house of Israel and Judah. That is, as they lay in their state of rejection from God ; and if the Lord could not have made these bones to live, he had failed of his confirmation of their faith touching the restauration of this dead people.*

When the Ministers of the Gospel are sent forth to preach to sinners, it is even as likely a service, as if they

had been sent among the Tombs and the Graves, to prophesie to the skulls, and the Bones, and the dust of the dead ? And if there were not a Divine and almighty power accompanying their Ministry, their success would be the same, as if they had been preaching the Beasts of the Field into Men, or of Stones attempting to raise up children to *Abraham*.

3. It is an inward Soul-change ; Regeneration is the *unising of dead Souls to Christ*, Gal. 4. 19. *My little children, of whom I travel in birth, until Christ be formed in you.* Here note three things.

1. That the result of this union with Christ is *new life*, 1 John 5. 12. He that hath the Son hath life, *Generatio unius est corruptio alterius.*

In this Generation there is a Death, and a Life.

1. A *Death*, Col. 3. 3. *Ye are dead*, that is, *Your sins are dead*, your old man is dead ; *Our old man is crucified with him*, Rom. 6.

2. A *Life* : There is new sense and motion, there is a living power communicated to souls united to Christ, whereby they are enabled to move and act in such an holy, spiritual and heavenly way, as was impossible before : Grace is a living thing, that spirits and animates all the Faculties anew, that puts life into all the duties and performances of the Saints ; which though for the matter of them they might have been done before, yet they were but the dead carcases of duties, rather than the things themselves.

2. This new Life is a *new Nature*, the Saints participation of the Nature of Christ, a change of the qualities of the soul : they are *new creatures* that have passed the *new Birth* : The second *Adam*, as well as the first, brings forth his children in his own likeness : The *divine Birth* is the bringing forth of the *divine Nature* :

2 Pet. 1. 4. As they said vainly, *The Gods are come down*

down in the likeness of men : it may be here said truly, Men are raised up in the likeness of God, renewed after his Image, made partakers of his holiness : Those that put any thing less in this change than the new creature, make Regeneration to be as very a contradiction as the Popish Transubstantiation : Bread is made a god, and yet is bread still ; a Brute is made a Saint, and yet remains a Brute still ; A God under the accidents of bread, and a Saint under the qualities of a Swine.

3. This new nature is a *glorious nature*, comprehending in it that *divine light*, whereby the Saints are enabled to understand and look into the depths of eternity, the invisible things of God, the mysteries of the glorious Gospel, that *divine love*, and faith, and hope, and the whole train of glorious graces, together with those *principles of righteousness, truth, mercy, charity*, &c. whereby they are made capable of enjoying fellowship and communion with God, of bearing his Name, shewing forth his Vertues and Praises before the world, and doing his will : In sum, it is the Image of God, the Epistle of Christ written upon the Tables of their hearts : And thus much those Scriptural expressions, *New creatures, partakers of the Divine Nature, partakers of his holiness, children of light*, with the like, do signifie and import.

What a strange piece of vanity should we make of the Scriptures, if all these high and various expressions should signifie no more than that empty and pitiful thing that carnal men do count their Religion, or godliness ; that ever that ignorant, sottish, formal, brutish generation, which have no more of the knowledge of God than an Heathen, no more of the life of God than a Stock, no more of Religion than to say over a Prayer by rote ; So far from being partakers of the new Nature, that they know not whether there be any such thing, or what it

is : That ever such a blind, senseless multitude should be imagined to be the persons whom the Scripture means by *new Creatures, the children of God, the children of Light, the Images of God* : Much more that those who live after the flesh, who are proud, covetous, sensual, filthy, beastly in their conversations ; yet if they have been baptized, and passed under that sacramental regeneration, and do but say now and then, *I repent, or God forgive me*, that these also are the children of God, and have all that new Birth which is necessary to their seeing the Kingdom of God ; Who can with any colour of reason imagine ? Such as can make themselves believe this, have made such a forfeiture of their understandings, that they may be like in time to believe, that *the Devil is God, and that Hell is Heaven* ; and may even take up the Alcoran for their Bible, and let the Scriptures go for a Fable.

Sinners, Consider with your selves, is there any such thing as the new Birth ? Can there be a new Birth without a new Life ? doth Christ bring forth *dead Children*, or do dry bones live ? Doth the Gospel bring forth *monstrous births*, children without eyes, without an head, without an heart, or with the heart of a beast under the face of a man ? Doth it bring forth Serpents, Vipers, Dogs, Swine for its Children ? and must the kingdom of Heaven be peopled with such Inhabitants as these ? If these be the Children of the Kingdom, where or who are the children of this World ? Are the *Nathaniels* the *Israelites* indeed, in whom there is no guile ? Are these the true Seed, and the Saints spurious ? Are these the Sons, and the Saints Bastards ?

Or if you will, let these vile ones of the Earth go, as none of the seed ; take the best of carnal men, that have the fairest face of Religion, and form of Holiness, without the inside, the new Nature ; are these they ? Is the shadow

shadow the substance, and the substance but a shadow ? To say that the inward life of godliness, the spirit and soul of Christianity, is but a conceit, and this outside is all, this is Christianity, is as good reason as to affirm, that a picture is a man, and that a living man is but a picture ; and as good Divinity as I my self heard preached at Oxford thirty years since, by a zealous Advocate for the lawfulness of sports on the Lords day ; who preaching about the observation of the Sabbath, and distinguishing betwixt the substantial, and the circumstantial duties of that day, said, *That Preaching is a Religious Ceremony, Praying is a Religious Ceremony, but bowing at the Name of Jesus, standing at the Creed and Gospel, Holy and Religious Feasting, Holy and Religious Dancing ; these are the substantials.* Hence it follows,

1. That Regeneration is not a *suppositions* change, or the counterfeit of a change ; there is some difference hereby put betwixt persons and persons ; the Regenerate and the Unregenerate are not one and the same, no more then the living and the dead.

2. It is not a bare *Relative* change, as Justification and Adoption are held to be ; there is a change of nature wrought by it, and not barely of Relation.

3. It is not a *Superficial* change, or merely outward, that goes only skin-deep ; it is not as 'tis said concerning Baptism, only *the washing away of the filth of the flesh*, the cleansing of the out-side, and leaving lust to reign within. Regeneration is the change of the Man, and not barely of the manner.

4. In this change we may read all Godliness ; we may read the use of things very much in their beings ; we may know wherefore they are, much the better, if we understand what they are ; Gods expectations may be read in his operations ; we may understand much

of our work, by observing Gods work upon us: As God in making men *living souls*, does thereby tell us, he expects other things from them, then from dead *stocks and stones*; and in making them *reasonable souls*, intimates, that he expects they should live other lives then *dogs or swine*; so in making them *Christians*, making them partakers of the Divine Nature, he makes it evident, that he expects they should live another life then *other men*.

The new life, or life of godliness, may be read in our new birth, or new natures: The Regenerate are said *Eph. 2. 10. To be created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that they should walk in them; Created unto good works*, that notes two things;

1. Intended to good works.

2. Fitted to good works.

1. That in their new making, they were intended to good works; this was Gods mind and meaning, he fore-ordained that they should walk in them: He did not set up such a light in man, to be put under a bushel; he bestowed not such a talent on man, to be bound up in a Napkin.

2. That in their new making, they were fitted to good works, *created to good works*, that is, they were brought forth in such an holy nature, endued with such a Divine light, such holy principles, powers, affections, dispositions, and inclinations, as fitted them for an holy active life: And this divine, and excellent structure of this new creature, do both signifie what life it is intended to; and that this life to which it is intended, is indeed an excellent life: there is something sure in this godly life: God did not new make men for nothing; and something of worth and real excellency, or else he would not have been at such cost in preparing men for it; if there were no other godly life, then that which the carnal

carnal world counts godliness, there needed no new creation to fit men for it. What is there in the whole frame of the Religion of the vulgar, but a carnal man may reach to? for the devotional part of it, *Saying or hearing of a prayer, observing of days, rites, and customs, &c.* what great difficulty is there in that? *May not a Publican do the same?* Yea, may not a Harlot, a Drunkard, an Idiot do the same? Such devotions, will neither disturb their lusts, nor yet will their lusts distaste or disable to such devotions; and for the righteousness of it, *To love those that love them, to be good Neighbours, to be no Extortioners, no Adulterers, &c.* there is not so very much in that, *do not even the Pharisees do the same? What do you more then others?* said Christ to his Disciples. What singular or excellent thing do you? God hath done singularly well by you, you are fearfully and wonderfully made (as 'tis true of the natural, so much more of your new birth) and curiously wrought, not in the lower parts of the earth, but in the highest Heavens; you are born from above, God hath done more for you then for others; what do you more then others? *Some it may be would have answered, What do you more than others? Why, there's no more to be done; all that's done more then others do, is meer fanisie or conceit:* But beloved, when you look upon that sapless, lifeless, empty way of Religion which others are content with, methinks your reasons should demand, What hath God new made me, made me partaker of the Divine Nature, of the life of God, for no more but this? Hath God given such a glorious Gospel, raised up such a mighty Saviour, who hath shed such precious blood, sent forth such a glorious Spirit, given commission to such multitudes of heavenly Ambassadors to preach, perswade, beseech, exhort, to travel in birth with me, till Christ hath been formed in me. and all this, to bring me to no better a life then this?

Surely there is something farther, that the Lord hath been at all this cost, and built this structure for.

Study this new Birth, study the Creation more thoroughly, and if you see not the most holy, heavenly, spiritual conversation that is pleaded for, radically and seminally in the bowels of it, then let godliness pass for a fan-
sie for ever. Let the Regenerate but live according to their new nature, and if that be not the very godly life we contend with you about, then call us what you will.

5. *Faith is no fan-
sie, Heb. 11. 1. Faith is the ground,
or the subsistence of things hoped for, and the evidence of
things not seen.* It hath a sure foundation on which its
bottom'd, that sure word of promise; 2 *Pet. 1. 19. To the
which (said the Apostle) ye do well that ye take heed.*
There is a believing on Christ for salvation, and a believ-
ing that we shall be saved by Christ; the former is called
the direct act of Faith, and is the souls accepting of Christ
the Lord and Saviour, and an adventuring, and resting
upon him for life; this is founded on the Rock of ages, on
the veracity and faithfulness of that God that cannot
lie, who hath said, *Jeb. 3. 16. Whosoever believeth on his
son, shall not perish, but have everlasting life.* The latter in
the Saints, is called, the reflex act of Faith, and hath its founda-
tion partly on the Word of God without them, partly on
the Work of God within them: And this Faith, or rather
this act of Faith, if the former hath been first put forth,
is such also as will never deceive. As those that trust
in God, because they have the Word and Oath of
God, in which two immutable things it is impossible for God
to lie, shall not be confounded, but have strong consolati-
on: So those that believe they shall be saved, because
they find their hearts purified; who believe that their
names are written in Heaven, because they find the Law
and Image of God written and engraven on their
hearts; who believe that they shall not come into con-
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demnation, because they are in Christ, and walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit ; who believe they shall overcome death, because they have overcome the world ; that they shall reap in mercy, because they have sown in righteousness ; that they shall reay in joy, because they have sown in tears ; that they shall receive the inheritance of Sons, because they have received the adoption of Sons ; who finding themselves firmly knit and joyned to the Lord, are *perswaded that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus their Lord.* Those that on such grounds as these, believe they shall be saved, it shall certainly be unto them according to their faith ; if it be thus with them indeed, if they be in Christ, if they walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit, if their hearts be purified, &c. The Word of the Lords stands good and sure to them, that they shall not come into condemnation ; and they shall as infallibly be saved, as if their particular names had been written in the promise : The veracity of God stands firmly engaged to make good conditional promises, where the condition is fulfilled, as if the promise had been absolute.

There is a faith which is a meer fanisie. The faith of *Enthusiasts*, who believe upon unscriptural Revelation, who believe above and besides what is written ; Faith of *Ignorants*, whose belief, is, (according to the *Athenians* worship) on the *unknown God* ; the Faith of *Idlers*, who believe they shall rest with Christ, though they never laboured with him : The faith of the *Profane*, who believe they shall be saved, though they be not sanctified ; such faith is meer fanisie ; opinion or presumption, you may call it, rather then faith : You that are ignorant idle, profane, & un sanctified ; & yet believe that you shall be saved,

ved, you believe a lie, you believe that which God hath never said shall be ; nay, believe that which God hath said shall never be, *Jer. 27. 11. They are a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not save them* 1 Cor. 6. 11. *Such shall never inherit the Kingdom of God* Hear, sinners, hear, God must be a Lyar, or your faith is a Lie.

But the faith of Gods Elect, such as hath been before described, this is that precious tried faith, by which who soever believes shall not be confounded. Christians, you that have obtained such precious faith, a Christ-embracing faith, an heart-purifying, a flesh-mortifying, a world-conquering faith, you may venture safely upon it ; never this faith deceive, God hath deceived you, the Scriptures have deceived you, Christ hath deceived you, who hath prayed (and we may be bold to turn Christs prayer into a promise) that this faith fail not ; let the Phana-tick World laugh, and mock, and call your consolations delusions, your confidence conceit, or what they will ; let them alone, you must give Losers leave to talk and laugh ; yet, *Cast not your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.*

6. The Doctrine concerning *good works*, is a certain truth. In this I shall shew,

First, What we are to understand by *good works*. A good work in general, is an holy or gracious action ; to the making up whereof, these *four things* are necessary.

1. The principle must be good from which it proceeds, it must be from an honest and upright heart, from a pure conscience, from faith unfeigned, &c. *Mat. 12. 35*

1 *Tim. 1. 5.*

2. The matter must be good ; something that is commanded, *Micah 6. 8. He hath shewed thee O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee ?* *Isa. 29. 13. Their fear towards me, was taught by the precepts of men*

3. The

(III)

3. The form or manner of doing must be good, it must be well done; this takes in the consideration of its circumstances, of time, place, &c.

4. The end must be good, it must be done to the glory of God, 1 Cor. 10. 31.

As to the particular kinds of good works, they are not easily to be reckoned up: The Papists talk little of any good works, but the exercises of bounty and liberality, in giving alms, feeding the hungry, cloathing the naked, visiting and relieving the afflicted, building of Almshouses, colleges, and the like; upon which they insist so much, as if there were scarce any other good works, but such as these; but we may not confine them within so narrow a compass. Good works do signifie the same with good life, or a godly life; the doing and observing all things which God hath commanded us; Our living honestly, circumspectly, fruitfully, imports the same with our doing good works; the exercising of all the graces of Christ, faith, love, hope, &c. The subduing and mortifying of lust and corruption, the governing our passions, the governing our tongues, the ordering of our relations towards God, and towards men; all acts of Religion, Righteousness, Mercy, Charity, Praying, Fasting, Hearing, Sanctifying the Sabbath, Lending, Giving, Forgiving, Peace making, Instructing, Exhorting, Reproving, Denying our selves, taking up our Cross, following Christ, Fighting the good Fight of Faith, laying up treasures in Heaven, and the like; these are good works: every thing is a good work, concerning which God will say at last, *Well done good and faithful servant*: all these the Lord requires,

That we act, *ad extremum virium*, to our utmost, Eccles. 9. 10. *What thine hand finds to do, and what thy head, or thy heart findeth to do, do it with might*, Tit. 2. 14. *Zealous of good works*, Rom. 12. 14.

Not

Not sloathful in business, but fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord.
Col. 1. 10. Fruitful in good works. 1 Cor. 15. ult. Abounding in the work of the Lord.

2. That we act in these, *Ad extremum vita*, to the end of our daies, Deut. 6. 2. Fear the Lord thy God, and keep all his Statutes and his Commandements, all the dayes of thy life.

3. That we be doing *Per totum vita cursum*, without intermission; there must not only be well-doing, but continuance in well-doing, Rom. 2. God will not have any Chasms or vacuities in our lives, but every day must be filled up with the duties of it; Christians must not think of getting to Heaven *per saltum*, they must not leap but walk; they must not leap over a duty, nor leap over a day, *nulla dies sine linea*. The Law of God doth not allow a day to sin, nor abate us one dayes work. To demand a breathing time from the service of God, is to desire much time for the service of sin. We are ever serving one Master or the other, we are certainly serving sin, when we are not in one way or other serving the Lord.

Secondly, That good works are necessary: Necessary to salvation; so though we are not like to be saved by our works, yet we cannot be saved without them. He that works not, shall not eat bread in the Kingdom of God. The everlasting rest is not for loyterers, but for labourers, Mat. 7. 28. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Faith cannot save us without works: The Apostle tells us, James 2. 26. Faith without works is dead; and a dead faith cannot bring us to life. Therefore the Apostle Paul so vehemently charges, Tit. 3. 8. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God may be careful to maintain good works; for these things are good and profitable.

Where observe the preface to the charge, *This is faithful saying*, that is, a true saying, and a great truth, worthy saying, or strenuously worthy to be delivered, worthy to be received, *and these things I will that thou firm constantly*, or teach constantly, or resolvedly, be not beaten off from it. Why, what is this great truth? Why this is it, *That they which have believed in God, as if they would that their faith should stand them in any stead, must be careful to maintain good works*: not only to do good works, but ~~wisdom~~ to maintain, or to excel and abound in good works, these things are good and profitable to men.

Now let me demand of all the world, where lies the fanaticism in any of all this? which of these Doctrines is that is but a conceit? Is it this, that *Christians must only be Believers, but must do good works*? Is it this? *that they must work with all their might, that they must continue at their work without intermission*, (that is) that they must bestow none of their time on the Devil, but on God? Or is this the conceit, *That this well-doing necessary to our well being*? Let this be granted, that there is no fanfie in all this, and I have at once dispatched my whole undertaking; and if I had no more to say, I have sufficiently made it good to you, that strict godliness is no fanfie. For this Doctrine of good works, which I have laid before you, *this is godliness*, godliness the greatest severity and strictness of it; grant a necessity of such a life as this, and you grant all that is demanded. And can any of this be denied? Must we serve the Lord? To be doing good, is the same with serving God. Must we serve the Lord openly, and wholly; may not sin claim a share, and now and then something to be done for the Devil? Must we serve the Lord with all our might, or may less serve? Consider the Scripture, *17. 10. When you have done all that you can, say,*

we are unprofitable servants, we have done no more than is duty to do. When we have given unto God all that we owe him, then let the Flesh and the Devil take the rest.

Beloved, consider what I have said, and observe whether all that diligence, faithfulness, zeal, tenderness and preciseness which the strictest Christians either practise or profess, be not included in these three things, to serve the Lord with all our might, to the end of our days, and in a constant and continued course of godliness.

Christians! Now that you see what little weight of reason hitherto there appears in this charge of the work against us, let us be encouraged to hold fast, and hold on our holy course; let our practises be exact according to our principles, and let our principles alone to plead for themselves; God will plead for them against all the world: Let us not give occasion to evil men to charge us with looseness, and then we may give them leave to charge us with overmuch strictness.

But oh, how much reason have we to blame our selves on the one hand, whilst they injuriously blame us on the other: Too strict, too precise, too painful in the work to the Lord! ho, how sadly deficient rather are we! How spare are our duties! How little is our care! How uneven are our goings! We need not fear any excess, where we feel so many defects. Oh how scanty are our services for our God! How barren are our fields! How thin do our good fruits spring up? Sinners, charge us with our barrenness, and we will joyn with you in the charge: The Lord pardon us, it is but little that we have brought forth; our good fruits are but like the gleanings of the harvest, here and there an ear, or a poor handful; or like the gleanings of the Olive tree, Isa. 17. 6. *Two or three Berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches.* Blessed be God for any thing, but woe to us that there is no more; it is but here a little and

here a little, here a line and there a blank that we have
 to shew. Oh how many Chasms and Vacuities are there
 to be found in our course? how many empty hours and
 empty days have we lived, concerning which, if we
 should have asked, *Anima quid fecisti hodie?* Soul, what
 account canst thou give of this days work? In stead of
 giving in our *bill*, we must give in a *Blank*, and write
 down nothing but *perdidi, perdidi*, I have lost a day
 more. Oh Brethren let us take heed of giving in any
 more such blank accounts; lest from our *perdidi* we
 should at last come to write down *perii, perii*, I am lost,
 I am undone, I have lost so much time, that now I am
 afraid I have lost my soul.

Beloved, whilst others bespatter our diligence, let us
 bewaile our negligence; let us bewaile it and amend.
 To be strict, and watchful, and fruitful, be to be vile
 and foolish; let us resolve with that holy King, *We will*
be more vile then this; we will be more foolish then this,
 than this be folly: whilst men charge us, that our Religi-
 on is fanisie, we have no such way to vindicate it, and
 prove it a reality but by being more Religious, more
 strictly so, more fruitfully so: our fruitfulness in good
 works will be the proof of our sincerity, and will si-
 lence our adversaries calumnies.

Object. *But is there so much in this doctrine of good works,*
and all necessary to salvation? Who then can be saved? May
not a good will serve to make up the defects of good works?
We have heard that God accepts the will for the deed, and we
hope that though we have done little, yet that this will be ac-
cepted, that we have a willing mind.

Sol. Though this be a truth, and may administer com-
 fort to Christians in many Cases, that a willing mind is
 accepted with God, where there is little done: yet be-
 cause it hath been by divers much mistaken and abused,
 and this mistake hath probably proved fatal to many a
 soul,

soul, being made use of to serve for an excuse of a lazy heart and barren life? give me leave before I proceed any farther, to turn aside a little, and make some stay upon the consideration hereof, and to shew you in what sense the will may be accepted, where the work is not done.

There is a question put amongst the School-men, whether a will to sin, where the act follows not, contracts not as great a sin in the sight of God, as both the will and the act: *Durandus* determines it thus, the reason why the will to sin brings not forth the act, may be twofold either *propter incompletam & imperfectam voluntatem*, because the will is not so fully peremptorily resolved and set upon it; or else, *propter impedimentum aliquod*, because though the will be fully resolved upon it, yet there is something that hinders the execution, as it may be want of power or opportunity to commit it: Now in the first case, says he, where the reason of the not acting of sin, is the incompleatness of the will, there the will without the act is not as great a sin as the will and act together: but if the will were so fully resolved, that it would have brought forth the act, if it had not been hindred, there the guilt is as great, if the sin be not committed, as if it had been committed.

There may be use of this to the determining the present question: where there is a will to perform a duty and yet it is not done, if the reason of the failing be not from the incompleatness of the will, but from some unavoidable hindrance, there the will is accepted, as if the work had been done: where the will is so strongly set upon duty, as that it would have brought forth the performance, had it not been for some invincible hindrance, shall not fail of acceptance; the reason is, because where the defect is not in the will. God hath the heart, and wheresoever God hath the heart, there is certain acceptance.

tance with God: where the heart is engaged against any particular lust, and is resolved upon it, this lust I must mortifie, and through the help of God will seek its destruction; though it cannot yet compass it, yet this resolution evidences, that the heart is on Gods side; it doth not side with lust against God, but sides with God against lust, and so in all other the like cases, *2 Cor. 8. 11. If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not*: He that gives according to what he hath, he that does according to what he hath, and does it heartily, shall be accepted undoubtedly. It may be thy case may be such sometimes, that *to will* may be *all thou hast* towards a Duty: As for instance, when thou hast a will to shew mercy, to give an Alms, if thou hast nothing to give, thy will is all thou hast. 'Tis true, there may be mistakes, and we are too apt to such mistakes, to impute our failings in duty to want of ability, when they are for want of will. How ordinarily do men thus excuse the grossest neglects, even when they yeild themselves over to an universal careless and idle life, wherein there is not the least care or pains taken to please or follow God? Why, *I do what I can, I can do no more then I can*, I would live a better life, but I cannot; when yet the will is only in fault: though you can do no more then you can, yet if you had a good will to it, you might do more then you do. But still the great question will be, how may I know (in case of failings of performance) whether my will be so fully set upon my duty, that there *would be performance* if it were not hindred, if it were not for want of power or opportunity? I answer,

1. There is no pleading want of ability to excuse a total neglect of godliness: if the pretence be of want of ability to live a godly life in general; *I am willing to live a godly life, but cannot*, there 'tis certain the defect is in the will; the Spirit of Sanctification, is a *Spirit of power*, and where the will is once savingly renew'd by that mighty

ty Spirit, there is certainly such a power communicated, as will infallibly bring on the soul to follow God in a course of godliness, whatever particular weakness and failings there may be, *2 Tim. 1. 7. God hath not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind.* *Jer. 42. 20, 21. Ye dissembled in your hearts, when you sent me to the Lord your God, saying, pray for us, and whatsoever the Lord our God shall speak we will do it.* Here was a fair promise, what could be said more? *Whatever the Lord shall say, we will do;* and like enough they might have some intention to it; but says the Prophet, *Ye dissembled with me all the while; why, how does that appear?* why, in the next verse, says he, *I have this day declared it to you, but you have not done any thing for which the Lord your God sent me to you.* If your hearts had been right, there would have been something done, but you have done nothing. Beloved, you that say you fain would follow God, but cannot; you would fain live a godly life, but do nothing towards it; you would willingly leave off your worldly life, or your fleshly life, or your idle life; you would fain leave off your drinking, and gameing, and wantonness, and betake your selves to praying and repenting, and denying your selves, and minding your souls, and the things of Eternity, but you are not able; the meaning is this, you are not willing, you cannot find in your hearts to take up such a *course*, you have some *velleities*, some *wishes*, and weak inclinations to godliness, but no will to it; if there were a willing mind within, doubtless there would be some sign of it in your course without.

2. For particular Duties, when we are willing to them, and yet fall short of performance, we may know that the will would bring forth the acts, were it not for some great impediments.

1. When the non-performance of Duty brings forth *sorrow and trouble of heart*, when it is a grief of mind to

us that we cannot do what we would, *Rom. 7. 18, 19, 24.* *To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not; the good that I would do, &c.* Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this *Death*? That which hindered him was a sore burthen to him, under which he groans, and passionately wishes for his redemption and deliverance from it; those who in case of failings are quiet, and well enough contented, much more, those who are glad of an excuse, as too often 'tis to be observed in many, who when they are put upon difficult or displeasing duties, are glad they have so much to say for themselves, that they are not able, or have not opportunity; 'tis an argument, that little would have bin done, had they had never so great ability.

2. When, if we cannot do the duty, *we do what we can towards it.* A man that's poor, and cannot give an alms to his Brethren in distress, yet he can pity them, pray for them, make their case known to others that can relieve them; if he do not what he can, if he do not open his bowels to them, though he cannot open his hand, though he had never so much, his poor brother would be like to be little the better. The poor widow that cast in her mite into the Treasury, which was all she had, 'twas a sign she had a large heart, though she gave so small a gift, *King. 8. 17.* David had it in his heart to build an house for God, and yet did it not, the Lord hindred him. How may it be known that David would indeed (if he might) have built it? why, by this it appeared, though he might not do it, yet he did what he might towards it; though he might not build, yet he prepar'd materials for the building. If thou art but a babe in Christ, hast but a little time, hast yet but a little understanding, a little strength; though thou canst not follow the Lord so exactly; nor attain to such a fruitful life as those that are grown and experienced Christians have attained to yet if whilst thou art but a child, thou dost follow the Lord as a

child, according to the measure of thine understanding and ability; thou art yet unskilfull, and performest thy duties in a broken manner, but yet thou dost perform them; thou art *weak* as a child, but yet art *tractable* as a child, willing to be led where thou canst not go; it is thus with thee, thou needest not be discouraged, he that whilst he is but a child, does follow God as a child, according to his measure, 'tis a sign that if he were a man, he would follow him as a man. If you labour under any lust or violent passion, which it may be flows from your *natural complexion*, or bodily constitution, which whenever its moved & stirred, you are not able to stand before it; and notwithstanding you know it is your duty to mortifie and crucifie it, yet still this is your case, that though it be *matter of great grief to you*, & as a continual thorn in your flesh, & it be the longing desire of your soul to have it destroy'd, yet you can do little to it; in this case,

1. If your will to be rid of it, bring forth a continual watching & praying against it; if you cannot overcome it, yet you are still fighting against it; if it will live in you, yet you will not let it live in peace with you: especially if

2. Your striving against it be not altogether without success, but brings forth some actual restraint of it, as to those outward acts by which it would vent it self; as if you can't overcome passion, yet you restrain in some measure your tongue from uttering it in any angry words; or if you cannot overcome your inward pride, yet you do forbear those self-exalting words, & vain boastings &c. by which that lust is so vented; if your heart be so set against it, that it thus strives against the lust within, and does ordinarily restrain some of its outward actions, you may be sure that if you could have your will, it should not be suffered to lodge one night more within you. If you have a slothful heart, are naturally, or by occasion of any bodily distemper dull, heavy and unactive, and are still wishing for a more active lively spirit, but cannot at

tain it; yet though your heart be heavy and sleepy, you will not let it sleep in quiet, but are frequently jogging and awakening it by the most stirring & quickning considerations, if you endeavour to serve the Lord with the best you have; if what you want in quickness and spriteness, you labour to make up in seriousness; though you make on by a slow pace, yet you do go on; why, then know, that you have to do with a God that knows and considers your frame, and in this case also will accept you, according to what you have, and not according to what you have not.

3. If there be some duties that you are unable to do, yet if you be faithful in others that you can do; if you have not an alms to give to one that's poor, yet you can give counsel to him, and therein shew kindness to his soul; if you can't so well compose your thoughts to any fixed meditation, but are unavoidably perplexed with confusedness and distractions, yet you can pray, or you can spend the more time in reading; do you do that? If you cannot so profitably, or to so much spiritual advantage improve Christian society, do you do the more in private, in your more retired and immediate converse with God? If you want courage or boldness to appear for God, in exhorting or reproofing others, especially such as are above you; yet you have families wherein you can be bold; what do you there to your children, to your servants? Do you instruct them, warn and reprove them? &c. Though (as before) you can't extend mercy to others in their needs (having not wherewithal yet you are just and righteous, and honest, and peaceable in your dealings with, and carriage towards all? If you are just, and would be merciful; if you had wherewithal if you are profitable in your conversing with your Families, & would be so to others, if you could get up to courage & boldness: if you are serious and spiritual, & affectionate in secret, and have a will to be so in society, that's an

argument that your will would bring forth performance there also, if it were not hindred.

4. If at such times, when there are not such impediments, we then do what at other times we cannot ; that which we cannot do at some times, as in sickness, or in times of desertion or temptation, may be done at another time, when we are not under such disadvantages.

Now gather up all these together, and then the question will easily be determined. He that hath a will to walk in all the duties of godliness ; he that does ordinarily walk in the practice of those holy duties which he hath power to do ; he that doth what he can towards those duties which he cannot fully reach to ; he that mourns, and is grieved in his heart under his failings, this man may have ground to conclude, that his spirit is sincerely willing, though his flesh be weak, and that his willing mind is accepted with God, as if it did really perform : But now, those that pretend to have a good will to godliness, but yet in their general course are carnal and careless, and there's little or nothing of a godly life to be seen ; those that do not what they can, that do not endeavour to do what they cannot, that do not mourn under their failings, but are contented and quiet, and satisfy themselves in this, that their will is good, and that God accepts their will for the deed, such as these do but deceive themselves, and are not upright before God, nor accepted with him.

7. The doctrine of the last Judgment, and the different rewards that shall then be rendred to those that are sincerely godly, and all others in the World, is no fan-sie, but a real truth. I am dealing with *Pharisees*, not with *Sadduces*, and therefore shall not need to prove either the Resurrection or Judgment : My main business here will lie in the proof of the latter part, *That the sincerely godly shall have in the judgment a far different reward from all other men.* That God hath appointed a day

in which he will judge the World in Righteousness, I hope you will give me leave to believe that you are already satisfied in it: When all the Men of this World shall have run their course; when the Courtly gallants, and the ruffling Roysters, when the proud Minions, and wanton Mimicks shall have acted their glorious part; when the trampled and contented Christians shall have all run their weary Race; when the last Scene shall be over, the Stage-cleared, the Curtains drawn; when the beggars Rags, and the great mens Robes, when the Warriors swords, and State-mens gowns shall be put off and laid aside, and the poor oppressed shall stand upon even ground with their mightiest oppressors, when the Kings of the Earth shall have laid down their Crowns, and the Princes their Scepters; when the Judges of the Earth shall have broken up their Courts, and their Term is ended; then shall the God of Glory erect his Tribunal, before which, all persons from the least to the greatest, must make their personal appearance, have all their ways and actions examined, and considered over again, and receive their doom: *Then shall men return, and discern betwixt the righteous and the wicked, betwixt him that served the Lord, and him that served him not: Then shall men say, Truly, there is a reward for the righteous (a peculiar reward) doubtless he is a God that judgeth in the Earth.* If you ask, What shall this reward of the righteous be? and what shall be the difference betwixt theirs and the rewards of all others whatsoever? Let these following Scriptures be examined, and give in the answer, *Rom. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9. Who will render to every man according to their deeds, to them who by patient continuing in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and Immortality, eternal life; but to them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.* The words refer to the

last Judgment, as appears by the former part of them, *Who shall render, &c.* In the following part we have the dividing of the sheep and the goats, which are both described, and have their distinct rewards appointed to them.

1. *We* have a description of the sheep, and what their reward shall be; and by their description, these sheep should be the very same with *Precisians*, or circumspect Christians: *First*, They are such as seek for Glory and Honour, and Immortality; that is, that seek for a portion of Glory and Immortality in the world to come: They leave the Kingdoms of this world to be shared among the men of this world, and seek for that Kingdom which cannot be shaken. *Secondly*, They are well-doers, good men, and holy men, men of a good and holy life. *Thirdly*, They continue in well-doing: they are not good for a fit, but 'tis the way of their life. *Fourthly*, They patiently continue: Patience is either,

1. Of labour: they do not complain, nor are weary of their work, but buckle to it. Or,

2. Of sufferings: They can bear, as well as do: Or,

3. Of delay: they are content to stay for their reward till hereafter; let others take their portions and their rewards here, they are content to stay for theirs till hereafter. This is the description of the sheep: and of all the men in the World, who should these sheep be? Can they be any other men than those Godly men that have been laid open to you? Well, but what is the reward which in the judgment the Lord will render to these? Why, it is eternal life, eternal glory and blessedness: to them *that by patient continuance in well-doing, &c.* he will render eternal life. This is true, sinners, this is no conceit, it is a certain truth, and such a truth as your selves must believe before ever you can come to God, *Heb. 11. 6. He that cometh to God must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that (diligently) seek him.* Mark it, of them that (diligently) seek him. They are the same

same men you see that are spoken of here, and in the former Scripture: of these God is a rewarder, that is, with a special and glorious reward, that is necessary to be understood. God hath rewards for the ungodly: You that are proud and persecutors, and despisers of God, and his wayes, God will reward you for all your doings: but he hath a blessed reward for those that seek him: And thus saith the Text, *Every one that cometh to God must believe.* Sinners, you will not be persuaded now but these people are foolish, self-deceiving people, and that the Heaven, the Joy, the Glory and the Blessedness they feed themselves with the hope of, is only in their own fancies: but yet, if ever you come to any thing, if ever you be brought home to God, this is that which you (must) believe, that God is a rewarder, and a Glorious rewarder of them that *diligently* seek him. Thus we have the description of the sheep, and of their reward, and the certainty thereof; next we have the description of the goats, and their reward; of them there is a general description, *the men that do evil*, & this threefold particular description, 1. *They are contentious*, 2. *They obey not the truth*: But, 3. *They obey unrighteousness*: which for methods sake, I shall reduce to two Heads. They are described, 1. By their Contention. 2. By their Conquest.

First, By their Contention: There is a twofold Contention. 1. Of man with man. 2. Of man with God. This latter is exprest in Scripture by *gain-saying*, Rom. 10. by *resisting*, Acts 7. 51. *Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart, ye do alwayes resist the holy Ghost*; by *kicking*, Deut. 32. 15. This kicking implies, 1. Opposition against God. 2. Opposition joyned with scorn and contempt, putting a slight upon God, and all his *Counsels* and *Wayes* Now this latter is the Contention meant in the Text, Contention against God: they will not hearken to his voice, not be obedient to his truth: The Lord commands and calls them to accept of his Grace, and

to

to be obedient to his Law, but they reject God, kick against his Word. and refuse to hearken to him.

Secondly, By their conquest or victory in this contest ; after all the strivings of God with them, they still stand it out and overcome ; *they obey not the truth*, but persist to *obey unrighteousness* : where

1. By the Truth, we are to understand *the whole word of God*, John 17. 17. *Thy word is truth*, both the Word of *righteousness*, the Law; and the word of *Faith*, The Gospel : by obeying the Truth, we are to understand, submitting to the government of the Law, and accepting the Grace of the Gospel.

2. By unrighteousness we are to understand all those corrupt Principles, according to which the lusts of men do govern them ; which (I take) the Apostle means, Rom. 7. 23. by *the Law of Sin*. In that and the former ver. there is mention made of *four laws* contending one against another, whereof *two* are on one side, and *two* on the other, *the Law of God*, *the Law of the Mind*, *the Law of the Members*, and *the Law of Sin*. By the Law of God, is understood *the Word of God* : by the Law of the Mind, is understood in the Regenerate, *Grace* ; in the Unregenerate, *the Light of the natural Conscience* : by the Law of the Members, understand *Lust*, or *Concupiscence* : by the Law of Sin, those corrupt Principles, according to which Lust governs, as the Law of the Mind governs according to those holy Principles contained in the Word ; for there are certain Principles of unrighteousness according to which the flesh governs. To enumerate and reckon up all these corrupt principles, would be as great a task as to reckon up all the Doctrines of Truth, and the righteous commands of God ; to each of which holy Doctrines and Commands, there are in this Law of Sin, principles directly contrary. Now because it may serve the design I am now pursuing, viz. To help sinners to understand themselves, I shall mention some of the chief of them,

kick them, in number ten; which, if you will, you may call *the Devils ten Commandments.*

1. *Live to thy self.* Mind thine own things; this is the first and great Commandment on which all the rest hang, and to which they serve, and is the same as, *be thine own God, thine own Idol.*

2. *Let thy Will be thy Law.* Thou art thine own; thy Tongue is thine own, thy Time is thine own, thy Estate is thine own, maist thou not do what thou wilt with thine own?

3. *Make the best of the time present, and of present things.* Lose not a certainty for uncertainties: who knows what shall be hereafter? *Eat and drink, for to morrow thou diest;* be merry while thou maist, spend while thou hast; make Hay while the Sun shines; Death comes, and there is an end of all thy mirth.

4. *Stand fast in the Liberties of thy flesh.* Come not into bondage; be not a voluntary slave to a strict and restrained life, when thou maist, if thou wilt, use thine own liberty.

5. *Continue in sin, because grace hath abounded.* Christ died for sinners, God is merciful, why shouldest thou then fear to take thy course?

6. *Do as others do.* Go along with the multitude, fashion thy self to the times, be not singular: why shouldest thou think thy self wiser then others?

7. *Do no more in Religion then needs.* Be not righteous over-much, be not over-forward, a little Faith, a little repentance will serve thy turn.

8. *Do not trouble thy self about small offences.* Thoughts are free, Words are but things of course; what man is there that lives and sins not? What shouldest thou keep chado about thy sins? Are they not but little ones?

Be not over hasty. If thou must repent, it is time enough; torment not thy self before thy time, repentance will be well enough at last: when thou art old, thou wilt have

have little else to do; be not old whilst thou art young.

10. *Trust God with thy soul, rather then man with thy body*; that is, choose iniquity rather then affliction; venture no further in matters of Religion, then thou maist with safety. These are some of those corrupt principles which make up the Law of sin, to which all others may be reduced, and living under the power of any of these, or any other of the like nature, this is obeying *Unrighteousness*: As the Apostle sayes, *He that breaks one of the commandments of God, is guilty of all*: So he that lives under the power of any one of the Commandments of the Devil, is, if not under the power of all, yet as sure a slave to the Devil, as if he were guilty of all; he whose foot is entangled in one cord of the Net, is as fast as he that hath the whole Net spread over him: If a Bird be held by a leg or a wing, it is as sure, as if the whole body were in the Net. Here now you have also the description of the Goats; those are contentious, resisting the Lord, and the word of his Grace, and who after all the strivings of the Lord with them, do overcome, and hold their own, and persist in their disobeying the truth, and obeying unrighteousness, or living under the dominion of those corrupt principles, which make up the *Law of Sin*. Let me here demand of you these three things.

1. *Are not these principles I have mentioned, every one of them evidently principles of unrighteousness? And may they not as well be called the Devils Commandments, as the Devil be called a Devil?*

2. *Are not all those that live under the power of these principles, the very men here meant in the Text, by those that obey unrighteousness? may they not as well be called the Devils servants, as those wicked Laws, the Devils Commandments?*

3. *Are not all persons that are not precisely godly, in the sense I have before described it, evidently held under some*

of these corrupt principles? Is not this it which you in reproach charge upon the Saints, that they will not live under these, or some of these Rules? That they will not take their liberty, that they will not do as others, but they must be singular, forsooth, as if they were wiser then their neighbours, that they stand upon every trifles and small matter, &c.

Some of these Anti-Precisians, if they be laid to these black lines, do touch with them in every point throughout; you may well stile them *Hells through Conformists*, or *the Devils best Subjects*. Sinners, the whole generation of you that are of such a spirit, even every one of you that have a word to speak against the preciseness of godliness and godly men, come and look into this Glass which is here set before you: Do you know your own faces when you see them? Are not these principles the very pictures and expresse images of you? If you say they are not, 'tis because you do not know your own faces; if they are not, let me be rejected for a Liar and a Slanderer. But if you be, even all of you, these very men, then look a little further, & you may see what your reward will be in the Judgment. Why, what is it? Read on, and you have it; *To them that obey not the Truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil*. If you say, this is but your opinion, but for all that you may be mistaken, we hope to fare as well as you, the best of you, for all your great words. But our opinion? Why, is it never your opinion too? Do you never doubt? Are you never afraid that this may be, that this will be your portion? Did your own consciences never preach to you the same things? But whether they did or no, this is as true, that indignation & wrath will be the portion of every soul of you thus living and thus dying; this is as true, as that God is righteous. The righteousness of God is engaged to render to every man according to his Works; and so to them that obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and

and wrath, &c. And by this time you may see, that there is some difference betwixt the rewards of the Godly, and the rewards of all others in the world ; as much difference as betwixt life and death, mercy and wrath, everlasting joy and peace, and everlasting anguish and tribulation : if Heaven and Hell differ only in conceit, and if there be not as great difference betwixt the rewards of these and all others, as betwixt Heaven and Hell, then once more I tell you, we will be content to be the *Pharisees*. And have you not yet done with talking of our fancies and conceits ? Is it but a conceit, that there shall be a Judgment ? or, is this a conceit, that it shall then fare better with the sheep than with the goats ? or that those are Christs sheep, that hear his voice, and follow his steps, and keep by the shepherds tents ? Is this a conceit, that it shall fare better with the friends of Christ, than with his enemies ? or that those are the friends of Christ, who are the friends of holiness ? Is this a conceit, that it shall fare better with the servants of Christ, than with strangers ? or are those the best servants, who waste their Talents, or bind them up in a napkin ? will Christ say in that day, *away thou faithful servant, away from me ye workers of righteousness* ? You have loved me too much, you have pleased me too well, you have followed me too close, you have given your selves to too much praying, too much praising, too much fasting ; you have been too conscientious, too tender, too watchful, too holy ; you would not be merry, and idle, & vain ; you would not go along with your neighbours to their sporting, to their revellings, to their pleasures, but must needs deny your selves, and take up your Cross and follow me ; you could not be content with an earthly happiness, but you must have glory, and honour, and immortality ; you could not be content to venture on a groundless hope of glory, but you must needs make sure of it by patient continuance in well-doing : *Away from me you workers of righteousness* ; you

that have follow'd me in the regeneration, get you gone, get you down to everlasting destruction : Will this be the voice of the Judge at that day ? Will he call to sinners, *Come ye wantons, come ye wine-bibbers, come ye swearers, liars, scoffers, whore-masters, come ye blessed Crew, inherit the Kingdom !* All this must be so, if godliness be but a fanfic ; and do you not yet see, sinners, what men of reason, what men of Judgment are you, and how much truth or weight there is in your charge against the Saints ? Oh Christians, you see I hope sufficiently how little ground you have to take the least notice of, or discouragement from these confident adversaries, who in proclaiming you *Phanaticks*, must proclaim themselves either *Infidels* or *Idiots*. Thus I have shewed that the principles of godliness are not *Phanatical*.

2. The duties and comforts of godliness are no fanfics ; I shall instance in such duties, and those parts of duties which are most obnoxious to this censure ; the most spiritual duties, the most spiritual parts of duties, which being most out of sight, and above the reach of the carnal world, are most of all thus censured by them ; I shall mention only two, which indeed are comprehensive of all.

First, Worshiping God in the Spirit. If this be a fanfic, the Apostle *Paul* with the Christians, his contemporaries, were the great *Fanaticks* of their time ; who says of himself and them, *Phil. 3. 3. We are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit. We are the circumcision ;* that is, we are the people of God ; we are they who are circumcised with the circumcision which is without hands, circumcised in heart ; which is all one, as if he had said, we are Christians, *who worship God in the Spirit.* Worshiping God in the spirit notes. 1. The worship of the soul, or heart-worship. 2. The worshiping God through his Spirit, or in the Holy Ghost.

1. The worship of the soul, or inward worship, and that, 1. As it stands in opposition to meer bodily Worship ;

ship; I say not as it is opposed to bodily worship, but to meer bodily worship. 2. As it stands in opposition to the antiquated Jewish worship, which was more external, pompous, and ceremonious. *We worship God in the Spirit*; that is, we worship God in the heart, and in the simplicity and plainness of Gospel-worship. Heart-worship is the true worship; the worship of the soul, is the soul of worship: The body without the soul is dead, & bodily worship without spiritual, is dead worship, *Joh. 4. 24. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth*. The latter word (*Truth*) is exegetical of the former (*Spirit*) signifying, that worshiping in Spirit is worshiping in Truth; *this is the true Worship indeed*. The worship of the body, the uncovering of the head, the bowing of the knee, the lifting up of the hands or voice, these are but the out-side and carcass of worship, and so far only capable of being accounted Worship, as they are helpful to, and expressive of the devotions of the soul. As bowing of the knee signifies the bowing of the heart; as the uncovering of the head, either expresses, or helps towards the inward reverence of the soul, so far are they worship and no farther, & even these but improperly so called. But as they stand single and separated from the inward worship, they are no worship no more then a carcass is a man, but are meer shadow & fantasies. There's no such *Phanatick* as the Formalist who whilst, with those Heathens. *Mat. 6. 7. He thinketh to be heard for his much speaking*, doth but play the Hypocrite & Liar; look what the Courtiers complements are such are the Formalists devotions, smooth words, tongue courtesies, flattering salutes, fawning cringes: *Your servant sir, your servant, command me what you please, I am ready to serve you*. Here's a great shew of respect and kindness, but what is there in it? what wise man will regard it? & what more is there in the Formalists devotions? What is it, but meer complementing with the holy God? Very

vout, and lowly, as to all appearance, and a great noise is there, that such devotion makes? but what is there in it? what awe, and soul reverence of God, what heart-strivings and wrestling with God, what heart-elevation, or lifting up the soul to God is there in all this? Is there no such thing as heart-striving, and soul-reverence required in the worship of God? or are these but shadows of worship, and is the soul of it only in the lips, or knees? Doth he whose soul is poured out in prayer, whose spirit strives with the Lord, doth he but pray in conceit, worship God in conceit? & those whose eyes and tongues, and hands only pray, have they gotten the substance, are these the true worshippers? Be- loved, be not deceived, God sees not as men see; he sees what is within man, he sees what is within our duties; they are not shews or sounds that can blind his eye, or please his ear, *Eph 5. 19. Be ye filled with the spirit, speaking to your selves in Psalms and Hymns, and spiritual Songs; singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord.* Believe it Christians, *Heart-Musick* is the best *Church-Musick*, heart praying, and heart singing, makes the best melody in the ears of the Lord of Sabbath. My work and intent is not to decry all external worship, as useless or unacceptable: We must glorify God in our bodies, as well as in our spirits; our lips must bear their parts in our prayers, and praises; but I would not that you should take the body of worship to be the soul, and the soul to be nothing. Be not conceited that the outward part is the worship, and the inward is but a conceit. Brethren, the living God will have living services; the God of our spirits, will have the service of our spirits; the worshipping God in spirit, this is the true worship. God will not be, and take heed you be not cheated with shews. When all the men of the world, with their wits, parts and interests, have commended,

garnished and magnified the carcass of Religion, and decayed, and disgraced its soul and life, yet this shall still stand as an irrefragable Truth, *They are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

2. Worshipping God through the Spirit, through the help and assistance of the Spirit of God ; as to instance in prayer, *Jude 20. Praying in the Holy Ghost, Rom. 8. 26. The spirit it self helpeth our infirmities.* The Spirit of God affords a threefold help in prayer.

1. He endites our Requests, suggests matter of prayer to us, who, as the Apostle there tells us, *Know not what we should pray for as we ought.* Carnal mens lusts do often mask their prayers, and then no wonder they ask amiss; when they should be seeking the death of their lusts, they ask their meat for their lusts; we often, not knowing what we ought to ask, do ask we know not what; we ask a stone, a serpent, a scorpion, sometimes, when we think we ask bread: If God should alwayes give his people their prayers, their prayers would undo them. When we are poor, we ask Riches, and it may be, if God should give us them, our Riches might undo us: Sometimes we ask ease, or credit, or liberty, and if we had what we ask, it might be our Ruine; the Spirit of God knows what's fit for us and accordingly guides our prayers; he helps us to understand *our sins*, and so teaches us what *confession* to make; carnal men will confess sins, but any sins rather than their own; he helps us to understand *our wants*, and so teaches us *what to ask*; he helps us to understand our mercies, and so teaches us *what to give thanks for*; carnal men often come before the Lord with *mock praise*, give thanks for their election, justification, sanctification, hope of glory, when it may be the power of sin, and the wrath of God abides upon them, and they remain without Christ;

and without hope, and without God in the world; the Spirit of God, if they had him, would make their devotions more Reasonable and Regular.

2. He excites, and quickens, and enlarges their hearts in prayer. The Spirit of God comes in and influences upon the heart, and draws forth the soul; and this is the import of the following words: *The Spirit it self maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered*: that is, he sets up a groaning and sighing after the Lord. *Groaning* notes the strength and ardency of desire, which through the fervency of it, puts the Soul to pain, and an holy impatience till it be heard; in which sense it's used *ver. 21. For we our selves, who have received the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan within our selves, waiting for the adoption, even the redemption of our body. It works such groanings as cannot be uttered*; it sometimes makes the hearts of Christians too big for their mouth, their desires more large then their expressions; as much warmth, and life and strength of affection as there does appear without, there's more within: Oh, how flat and dead are our hearts oftentimes! how much are we straitned in our prayers! we stand as men struck dumb when we come before the Lord; or if there be words in our mouths, there is scarce any word in our hearts; sometimes we cannot speak, and if we can speak, we cannot groan: the Spirit doth either put words in our mouths, or else supply the want of words by kindling and enlarging inward desires, helping us to groan out a prayer, when we cannot speak it out; and silent groans will sound in the ears of the Lord, when the loudest cries may not be heard.

3. He encourages and emboldens the heart in prayer, enables it to call God *Father*, to pray to him, to cry to him, to be confident of audience and acceptance with him; upon this ground, *Gal. 4. 6. God hath sent forth the*

Spirit of his Son into your hearts crying Abba, Father. And hereby he furnishes us with a mighty Argument to plead with God, Father, hear me; Father, forgive me; Father, pity me; Father, help me : Am not I thy child, thy son, or thy daughter? To whom may a child be bold to go? With whom may a child have hope to speed, if not with his Father? Father, hear me. The fathers of our flesh are full of Bowels, and full of pity to their Children, and know how to give good things to them, when we ask them; when they ask bread, will they deny them? when they ask cloaths, or any thing they want, will they deny them? And is not the Father of Spirits more full of Bowels, more full of bounty, then the Fathers of our flesh? Father, hear me. This is praying in the Spirit, and if this be a fancy with you, I must tell you, sinners, that it's such a fancy, as experienced Christians that have most proved it, would not lose for all your substance. But will you stand to it? Is this Phanatical praying indeed? then bring your *Index expurgatorius*, and expunge these Texts out of the Scriptures, or else, if you let them stand, and look over them again, you will next say, *Their Bible is as Phanatical as themselves.*

But let me add one word to convince you from your own judgment (if you understand what you do) that praying in the Spirit is no fancy; and this by putting this one question to you. Dare any of you all, when you go to God in prayer, deliberately refuse to beg the assistance of his Spirit? Whether you use a form, or pray without a form, that is not so material : The assistance of the Spirit is needed as well of those that use a form as of those that pray without it : Nor dare you I say when you go to pray deliberately, refuse to beg the assistance of the Spirit? Dare you say, *Lord, I need not nor desire any such assistance; I will not ask it of thee, that thy Spirit may be given unto me, to help mine infirmities.*

tis ? If you beg the assistance of the Spirit, you hope to have it; and if you have it, there is that praying in the Spirit, which you cry down for a fancy: Judge now, whether you do not condemn the things which your selves allow, and in your judgment and practice justify the realitie of that duty, which with your mouths you decree for Phanatical ? *Will you also be his Disciples ? Will you also be Phanaticks ?*

2. Walking in the Spirit, this is no fancy, *Gal. 5. 25. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.* In the prosecution of this, I shall shew, 1. What is meant by the Spirit. 2. What by walking in the Spirit. 3. That it is no fancy.

1. What is meant by the Spirit here : That, being something that is opposed to the flesh, or corruption, as appears, *ver. 16, 17* must of necessity be one of these two things, possibly both, either the *Holy Ghost*, and the influence, assistance, and operations of that holy Spirit or else that *New Nature* which is begotten in us by the Spirit; the grace of the Spirit infused into our hearts, and abiding in us; which of the two we understand it of, the difference will not be considerable.

2. What is meant by *walking in the Spirit* : Some there are, that by Spirit, understand the Doctrine of Christianity; and accordingly would have this walking in the Spirit, to be nothing else, but the embracing the Christian Religion. But if this be so. then what is to be understood by flesh, which *ver. 17.* is said to be contrary to this Spirit ? why, by flesh they will tell us, we are to understand Judaism : but then let me ask,

1. What is meant by the lusting of this flesh which was now dead, against the Spirit ? Is that the meaning of it, *Judaism* lusteth against *Christianity* ?

2. How can this dead flesh have such a numerous offspring, as is mentioned, *ver. 10. The works of the flesh*

are manifest, which are these, *Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanesse, Lasciviousness, Idoliatries, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, &c.* Must all these Brats be laid at the door of the Synagogue? Are these the brood of that Ceremonious Law of Carnal Commandments? or are they not manifestly the fruits of that corrupt Law of carnal Concupiscence? I know not with what shadow of Reason we can understand by the flesh, any thing else but Lust or Concupiscence; and then by the Spirit we must understand grace, or the Spirit of grace, which bid defiance, and are contrary to it. Let us consider further, what is meant by that expression, of being led by the Spirit, *Rom. 8. 14.* Why, possibly the same men will tell us, there is no more in this then in the former; it implies no more then the Spirits leading us into all Truth, the Truth of the Gospel, as the Star led the Wise men of the East to the *Messiah*: If this be granted to be all, yet here we have gotten something, *viz.* That the Spirit of God is acknowledged to be our Leader: but let us consider one Scripture more: *Ezek. 36. 27. I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes.* What are those Statutes of God, but the whole Will and Word of God? one or two of them I shall mention; If any will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his Cross, and follow me: Work out your salvation with fear and trembling: Quench not the Spirit: Abstain from all appearance of evil: See that you walk circumspectly, &c. Are not these, and many more such, sound and unrepeal'd in this great Statute-Book? What is it to walk in these Statutes, other then to live in the sincere obedience of the whole Will of God? Now, sayes the Lord, *I will give my Spirit, and he shall cause them, or help them to walk in my Statutes, to live an holy life.* Let these things be considered, and see if they will not help us to a better interpretation of those words, *Walk in the Spirit*:

rit: Why, what is the meaning then of them? I shall give you the judgment of one who was no *Phanatick*, *Cornelius A Lapide*, who in his *Commentary* on *vers. 16.* of this Chapter, interprets the same words thus, *Walk in the Spirit*; that is, *Vitam, actiones & mores institute secundum dictamen, instinctum, impulsam spiritus, ac gratie immixta & indita vobis à Spiritu sancto, qui suadet & monet ut spiritualiter vivamus.* To walk in the Spirit, signifies, 1. To live under the conduct of the Spirit. 2. To live in the power of the Spirit. 3. To live a spiritual life.

1. To live under the conduct and guidance of the Spirit, *Rom. 8. 14.* *As many as are (led) by the Spirit, are the Sons of God:* There is a double guide, whereby the Lord leads his people; the guide of his word, *Psal. 71. 24. Thou shalt guide me by thy Counsel;* and the guide of his spirit, *Jo. 16. 13. He shall lead you into all Truth.* There are two things which the Spirit doth in leading on his people.

First, He enlightens their eyes, opens their understandings, that they may understand the Scriptures, which point out to us our way, *Luk. 24. 45. Then opened he their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures.*

Secondly, He takes them by the hand, as it were, and leads them, *Isa. 40. 11. He shall gather the Lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.*

2. To live in the power of the Spirit, of that inherent and assisting grace which we receive from him, to be carried on in an holy course, and all the duties of it, both from the *intrinsic power* of the life of God begotten in us, and by the *concurrent influences* and assistance of the holy Ghost, whom God hath given us to help our infirmities. As in the duty of prayer, *Rom. 8. 26.* so in all other Christian duties, *Joh. 15. 5. Without me (says Christ, that is, without the assistance of my Spirit) ye can do nothing.* Therefore the *Psalmist* resolves, *Psal. 71. 16. I*

will go in the strength of the Lord, and by thee will I make mention of thy Name. And this living in the power of the Spirit is no other, then is signified (if we did understand what we say) in those common expressions which we ordinarily have in our mouths: *By the grace of God, or by the help of God, I will do this, or that*: What the Apostle speaks of himself as a Minister, is applicable to Christians, 1 Cor. 15. 10. *I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*

Thus to walk in the Spirit, is to follow those directions and imitations of the Will of God, which he gives us out of the Word; and those impulses of the spirit upon our hearts, whereby as by a gale of wind filling our Sails, he moves and helps us on. When you find any clear light breaking in from the Word upon your consciences, and thereupon some stirrings upon your hearts, either by the way of check, restraining and calling you back from any irregular or disorderly walking, or quickning and encouraging you on in a way of duty, this you may safely take to be from the Spirit; and when you entertain this Light, obey these checks, and follow these holy impulses, this is your walking in the Spirit.

3. To live a spiritual Life. In whom the Spirit hath begotten another heart, those he leads on in another Life. He that is born of the Spirit is a spiritual man, and those that are led by the Spirit, walk on in a spiritual course, that is they live a more noble and raised life then the rest of the world. Carnal men who are governed and ruled by that evil spirit that is in the World, live an evil and carnal life; worldly spiritual men, a worldly life; sensual men, a sensual life: *Ephes. 2. 2, 3. Wherein in time past ye walked after the course of this World, according to the Prince of the power of the Air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom we also had our conversations in the lusts of*

the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind. Whilst we were in the *common strice*, we took the *common Road*; whilst we were in the *flesh*, *fleshly men*, we lived a *fleshly life*. To serve our bellies, to serve our appetites, to serve our pride and covetousness, and other lusts, this was our life; And this life was *sutable* to that Spirit which was within them, and that evil Spirit, the Prince of this world without them, that govern'd and steer'd their course. Accordingly, the Saints having a new heart within, and a new leader without, do lead a new life; as the *flesh* and the *Devil* carry evil men on in a course *sutable* to their leaders, so the Spirit and grace of God carry on the Saints in a course *suiatable* to theirs, a *holy, spiritual, and heavenly life*. So that this is to walk in the Spirit, to live *holy and spiritually*; this is that life which is called, the *Life of God*, Eph. 4. 19. *The Conversation in heaven*, Phil. 3. 20 *Our Conversation is in heaven*. And a *spiritual and heavenly Life*, this may be called upon a threefold account. 1. Their dealings are about *spiritual and heavenly things* 2. Their delights are *spiritual and heavenly*. 3. By these *spiritual dealings and delights*, themselves become daily more *spiritual*.

1. Their dealings are about *spiritual and heavenly things*; God, and Heaven, and everlasting glory; and those *spiritual exercises*, whereby God is served, and glory obtained: these are the matters about which this life is spent. They live with God, they hold daily *intelligences* with heaven, they are much in the *contemplating and admiring*, and *adoring* the infinite beauty and incomprehensible perfections of God, and his unpeakable love, and grace, and goodness towards them. They are searching into the *mysteries of Christ*, studying out the *Riches of the glory of the mystery of the Gospel*: They live amongst *Angels*, their hearts & their eyes are daily in that *general Assembly and Church*

of the first-born. When they sleep, they lay them down under the wings of their Lord ; no sooner are they awake, but they get them up to the top of *Pisgab*, to take a view of the promised Land: *When I awake, I am ever with thee*, sayes the *Psalmist* : When the covetous man awakes, he is with his God; when the Epicure awakes, he is with his God; when the Adulterer awakes, he is with his goddess: Christians are presently above the clouds, above the stars, falling down before the Throne of the Almighty ; Their work is to seek, and serve, and praise, and pleate the Lord ; to carry themselves so, that they may be accepted of God ; to be washing their Robes, and making them white in the blood of the Lamb; to be minding their souls, consciences, affections, thoughts; that these may all, in their several capacities, exalt and enjoy the Lord : Their Trading is for the *Pearl*, whilst the Merchants of the earth are trading for gold and silver and spices; whilst the muckworms of the world are dealing in Corn and Sheep, and Oxen, and Asses ; whilst the wantons of the Earth are dealing about fashions, and feasts, and sports, trading in toys, Feathers, Apes, and Peacocks ; Christians are trading in Promises and Prayer, in Faith and Repentance, in Patience and Humility, in mercy and Charity, that by these they may make their calling and election sure, and so an entrance may be administred unto them abundantly, into the everlasting Kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. These are businesses of Christians lives, their dealings are about spiritual things.

2. These delights are in spiritual things: The Lord is the delight of their hearts: *Delight thy self in God*, sayes the *Psalmist*, 37. 4. And what he bids others do, he does himself, *Psal.* 16. 8 9. *I have set the Lord always before me, therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth*: The thoughts of God are dear and precious

to them ; The Word and Law of God is their delight,
Pfal. 1. His delight is in the Law of his God: The Courts
of the Lord, his Ordinances, Worship, Sabbaths, are their
delight, Psal. 84. 1. How amiable are thy Tabernacles,
O Lord of Hosts. Their work is their delight, Psal. 40.
I delight to do thy will ; Their hardest works, Fasting, and
Watching, and wrestling, and Fighting against sin and
temptations, crucifying, and mortifying their own flesh,
denying themselves, mourning for sin ; there's much
sweetness they find in their very travels, and tears, and
sorrowings, as sorrowing, sayes the Apostle, yet alwayes
enjoycing. As Solomon speaks of Carnal Mirth, Prov. 14.
In the midst of laughter the heart is sad : so it may be
said of spiritual Mourning, in the midst of sorrow the
heart is joyful ; the heart of a Saint is never in so sweet
frame, as when it is melted into Godly sorrow : but
*specially, Christ is their delight, he is *delicia* *Christia-**
nis orbis, Canticles 2. 3. I sate down under his shadow
with great delight : Carnal men are ready to say to
them, as the Daughters of Jerusalem to the Spouse,
Cant. 5. 9. What is thy beloved more then another beloved ?
What beauty is there in him, that thou shouldst thus
desire him, or take such pleasure in him ? They see no
beauty in him, he hath no Form, nor comeliness in
their eye; and therefore they think there is none. Oh sin-
ners, you do not know Christ, you have had no acquaint-
ance with him, you have not tasted of the fruits of
*this Tree, of the clusters of this Vine : *I sate me down**
under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was
sweet to my (tast.) Saints have tasted of the sweet-
ness of Christ, tasted that the Lord is gracious, and
therefore can take great delight in him : The delight
they take in Christ, is that which puts such a delight
into every Ordinance, into every Duty : Therefore
Praying and Reading is so pleasant to them, because
 there

there they meet with their Beloved ; Christ appears to them in his Word. Christ meets his Saints in their Prayings and Fastings, and this makes all sweet to their souls. Carnal men think the life of Saints to be an heavy, a sad and most troublesome life ; they count, that themselves have the only merry and pleasant lives ; that their Hawks, and Hounds, their Carding and Dicing, and Drinking, and Dancing, their Stews and Playes, that these are the only Heaven : This is all one, as to say, That God hath put more sweetness into creatures, then is in himself ; that the basest and vilest use of the creatures, do yeild more true content, then the souls exercising it self on God ; as if the *thorn* should yeild more sweetness, the *bramble* more fatness, then the *Figs-tree* or *Olive* ; where are the understandings of these men ? I tell you Sinners, when you have gone from flower to flower, from creature to creature, from pleasure to pleasure, and sucked out all the fatness and sweetness that these will yeild, a poor Christian will get more real pleasure out of one Chapter of his Bible, out of and honest Sermon, out of one hours converse with God in Prayer, then your whole life will bring you in. The Gospel, with its breasts of consolation, at which he sucks, yeilds him sweeter milk ; those clusters of *Canaan* on which he live, yeild him richer Wine then the whole world will afford ; and the gleanings of a Christians joy are better then the vintage of sinners ; and you cannot so much slight the glory of their Sun, as they despise the glory of your sparks.

3. By these spiritual exercises and delights, they become more and more spiritual themselves. By the beholding the Face of God, they are changed from glory to glory, into his Image and likeness ; by living much in heaven, the temper and frame of their hearts becomes heavenly ; mens ordinary company and ex-

cises have such an influence upon them, that 'tis not unusual that they change their disposition. Frothy company, and vain exercises, will leave a forthiness and vanity upon mens spirits; and serious, and savory company, and exercises, to leave a good savour behind them. He whose work is in the Coal-mines, his heiw is thereafter; the flies that feed on the dung, look like the dung they feed on. Carnal men, by being continually conversant about their earthly affairs, have nothing but earthiness left upon their Spirits; their thoughts, Affections, their Souls are become earth, earthly; their duties are earthly, their prayers, their hearing, all are earthly: When they go to Church, when they go to their Closets, they must carry their earth along with them, or leave their hearts behind them. On the other side, Christians, by having their dwellings with God, their Delights, their Recreations, their daily business with God, the Spirit of Glory, and of God, resteth upon them; by their *Divine Exercises*, they are made more partakers of the *Divine Nature*, and as Worldlings businesses and delights, do leave an earthiness upon their very Religion, so a Christians Religion doth spiritualize his Civil Affairs: Carnal mens prayers do savour of their fields, oxen and sports; Carnal mens Sabbaths, do smell of their working-dayes; and a Christians works, do savour of his prayers: a Christians week-dayes, have a tincture of his Sabbaths; he eats and drinks, he buyes & sells, he ploughs & threshes, not as a man, but as a Saint; he doth not only pray as a Saint, and hear as a Saint, but he ploughs as a Saint, he trades as a Saint; his heart is in Heaven, while his hand is at the Plough: he is serving his God, whilst he is serving his own necessities; he seeks, he serves he eyes, he enjoys his God, in all he hath or doth, he proves by his sense, that *God is every where*; with him he dwells, feeds,

feeds, labours, lodges, with him he lives, he dies. And thus you see what it is to walk in the Spirit. Look how far forth such a Christian lives in the Spirit, so far forth doth he live such a life as this.

3. This is no fancy; and if I fail not here, if I prove this, I hope, sinners, you will then see Reason enough to take the Fanatick upon your selves, and from thence forth stile these despised Saints in your *Stilo Novo, Israelites indeed*. Christians (you that hear me this day) will you help me in this proof, this once help me, and the cause will go clearly on the Lords side; you may if you will, come in, and be willing instances of this Truth. Will you live according to your Principles, that life of God which is within you? Will you live according to your Rules, that word of Life which is before you? Will you follow your Leader, that holy Spirit which is given to conduct you? Will you fall closer to the practice of that godliness which you profess? Will you live in obedience of that Spirit which you have received? Will you shew your selves a pattern of Faith, of Patience, of Righteousness, and Holiness? will you be dealing less about these earthly Vanities, and be less earthly in your earthly dealings? Shall your dealings be wholly about Heaven, and heavenly things? And will you make these your dealings, your delights? Will you labour by being more conversant about spiritual things, and in spiritual exercises, to become more spiritual, more spiritually minded, more spiritually tempered? Will you get more clear off the love, and lust, and fashions, and wayes, and joyes of this world? will you suffer the Eternal Spirit to fill you with his love, and fashion you into his likeness? will you forbear any more resisting, grieving, slighting, quenching his holy motions? will you hearken to his counsels, answer his impulses? will you grow on to be more Christians daily

more Saints daily, Saints in heart, Saints in tongue, Saints in general frame of your course? will you make your graces more visible, your comforts more visible, your spiritual joyes and delights more visible? will you let your light so shine before men, that they must either put out their own eyes, or else be forced to acknowledge that God is in you of a truth?

Brethren, we may much thank our selves for all our adversaries slanders; we have helped them to reproaches, we have furnished them with accusations; by our walking so much in the flesh, and so little in the Spirit, we have taught them to question, whether there be any such thing as walking in the Spirit. The Lord pardon us, the Lord makes us sensible of it; we have brought up an *evil report* upon our God, upon his Spirit, Gospel and wayes; and for ought we know, have undone many of our wretches, by our hardning them in their misconceits of Godliness and Religion: There hath been so much dross in our gold, so much ashes upon our fire, so much earth upon our spirits, such sad mixtures of water with our Wine, so much liberty taken for our Carnal joyes, and Carnal Pleasures; our light hath been so dim, our grace hath been so low, our good works have been so spare, and so thin, that we have made them bold to say, we are not what we are, but are a meer lye and deceipt: And we have now no such way to vindicate our selves, our Religion, our holy profession, to justify our God, and his Gospel, as by blowing up the coals, shaking off our ashes, stirring up the grace of God within us, and letting them have their perfect work in us. Will you, Christians, will you hearken to me in this? Then I should be bold to bring you forth as witnesses for God and his truth. However, though upon your account it would be more comfortable, though *ex abundanti*, I would bring in as many evidences as possible, yet if you should fail

fail me, or any other particular Congregation of Professors, yet let the world know, I have sufficient proof ready at hand. For, if this walking in the Spirit be a fancy, then these damnable absurdities will unavoidably follow.

1. That the Spirit of the Lord is unfaithful in his office.
2. That God himself is false in his Promise.
3. That the Devil doth more to the Damning of souls, than the Spirit of God to the saving them.
4. That God hath no People, no peculiar people, in the world.

1. It walking in the Spirit be a fancy, *the spirit is unfaithful in his Office*. That the Spirit of God is given to the people of God, to every one of them, is so plainly asserted, that he must deny the Scriptures that doth not grant it. *Rom. 8. 9. Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you: Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* That there are certain operations of the Spirit, which he is by office to perform, is as certain; as 1. *To enlighten*; therefore he is called *the spirit of wisdom and Revelation*, Eph. 1. 17, 18. 2. *To sanctify*; therefore Sanctification is called, *the Sanctification of the Spirit*, 2 Thess. 2. 13. 3. *To lead*, John 16. 13. *He shall lead you into all Truth*. 4. *To assist and help*, Rom. 8. 26. *Ezek. 36. 27*. 5. *To comfort*; therefore he is called, *The Comforter*. If the Spirit of the Lord doth this office, then there are persons that are *enlightened, sanctified, led, assisted, comforted* by him: If there be none such; if the comfort of the Saints be but pretended; if their light, their help, their quicknings, their encouragements, be all fancies; if they be but led in conceit, quickened in conceit, comforted in conceit, then where is the Spirit's faithfulness? See what blasphemies men run themselves upon, before they are aware. Sinners, take heed what you do; you are bold to reproach the Saints with *the Spirit, the Spirit*, but can

heed mean while of reproaching the Spirit with *unfaithfulness*: blasphemy against the Spirit is no small sin, though every blaspheming of the Spirit be not that *unpardonable sin*, yet it is a fair step towards it. Look to your selves.

2. If walking in the Spirit be a fancy, then God himself is false in his promise, *Ezek. 36. 27.* beforementioned, *I will put my spirit within them, and cause them to walk in my statutes.* If there be no such thing done, then where is the promise of God? He that makes walking in the Spirit to be nothing but talk, makes the Promise of God to be nothing but words.

3. If walking in the Spirit be but a fancy, Then the Devil doth more to the destroying of soules, then the Spirit of the Lord doth to the Salvation of Soules. Let us consider again that Scripture, *Eph. 2. 2.* *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this World, according to the Prince of the Power of the air, the Spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.* There are two things observeable to our purpose: 1. Sinners are led by the Devil. 2. They are assisted and excited by the Devil. 1. They are led by the Devil; that's noted in that expression, *They walk on according to the Prince of the power of the Air;* according to his guidance; according to his mind and will, he hath them at his beck. When he sayes go, they go; and when he sayes come, they come; and when he sayes do this, they do it. But how comes this to pass, that the Devil can hold such an hand over them, can lead them thus at their pleasure? Why, 2. They are assisted and excited by the Devils that evil Spirit works in them, suggests evil thoughts into them, and thereby excites, and provokes, and sets them a work. The Devil is said, *Acts 5.* to fill the hearts of *Ananias and Sapphira*, to lye against the holy Ghost: And when he had once put a lye into their hearts, their

hearts presently put a lye into their mouths. When the Devil hath wrought wickedness into the hearts of sinners, then they presently fall to working it out. When wicked men lye, it is the Devil lyes in them; when they curse, and rage, and swell with madness, the Devil rages in them; when the lusts of men bring forth Adultery, Drunkenness, Riot, Revelling, &c. the Devil lyes within blowing up the Coals. Is this but a conceit, that wicked men *walk in the Spirit*? That unclean Spirit? That the Devil draws them on, and drives them on, and helps them on, and hardens them on in their wickedness? Could men be so wicked as they are, could there be such quarrellings and contentions, such debaucheries and villanies, such cursings and blasphemings, such rottenness and ribaldries coming out of mens mouths, and abounding in their lives? Could there be so much constancy, fruitfulness, boldness, hardness in sinning, against all fears, warnings, reproofs, counsels, against conscience, and the dictates of their Reason & common sense, were it not for that evill Spirit that works in these children of disobedience? Now if it be no fancy, that wicked men *walk in the Spirit*, (this you must grant, or else you must conclude that they are all Devils themselves) and if you grant it, can you conceive it to be but a fancy, that the Saints *walk in the Spirit*? If the Devil works lyes and oaths, and curses into the hearts of sinners, sure you may well allow that the Spirit of God works duties, works a prayer, or praises, &c. into the hearts of the Saints. Could a poor Christian that hath so many corruptions within, so many temptations without, so many weakneses, hinderances, discouragements, ever follow the Lord in his holy wayes, against them all, if he had no other Spirit then his own to carry him on? The Saints sure have as much need of that help which is from above, to carry them on in holiness unto life, as sinners have.

have of that which is from beneath, to carry them on in iniquity to destruction; and methinks you should not question but the spirit of God will be as active to save, as the Devil is busie to destroy.

4. If walking in the Spirit be but a fancy, then God hath no people in the World, Rom. 8. 4. *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God.* As many, that is, just so many, and no more. God hath no more children in the World, then there are persons that are led by the Spirit; to be led by the Spirit, and to walk in the Spirit, signifie one and the same thing. If then there be no such thing, nor no such persons in the World to be found, where then are God's children? God hath no child, if this be so. You must write the God of all the Earth childless, a Father without a Child, a King without a People; if these wise men be true men, and true men you can hardly call them, who have robbed the King of Saints of all his Subjects, and the Father of Lights of all his Children.

You see now to what a plain issue this matter is also brought; if you be in the right in this thing, then the Spirit of God must be unfaithful in his Office, God must be false in his Promise; the Devil doth more to the damning, then the Spirit of God doth to the saving of souls; and one of these two things will follow hence, either that the Devil is of more might then the Almighty Spirit, or that the God of love hath not so much love as the Devil hath malice; and lastly, that God hath no People in the World.

But it may be sinners, you will yet reply, Well, we will grant that this is true, that there are those, that are led by the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, but when you talk of so much spirituality in mortal men, of such high notions, as living in the fellowship of the Spirit, living in Heaven, when, you tell us of such glorious light, such

raptures of joy, such extasies of spiritual delights, here are the fancies : these are the things which we cannot but account the foolish dreams of deluded hearts.

And now you think you have hit it at last. But is not this it which you say, The Spirit enlightens, but gives no light : The enlightened see no more then the blind : The Spirit renews men, and yet they are not changed : The Spirit leads the Saints, and yet they follow him just as fast as those that have no legs : the Spirit dwells in them, and yet have no more fellowship or acquaintance with him, then those that never saw him : The Spirit assists, and yet gives no help : The Spirit comforts, and yet gives no joy : but after all he hath done, leaves them just as other men, and whatsoever they pretend to have more, is a meer cheat and delusion. The sum of all comes to this, The Spirit doth, and yet doth not ; doth something, some great thing, and yet that something is just nothing.

But is there no such life of God, wherein the Lord having gotten the chief interest in the heart, hath also the dominion of the life ? Is there no such life, the main dealings and business whereof, is the pleasing and honouring of God, and the seeking that glory and honour which is from him ? Must God be an underling to the world, and be put off with our spare hours, which the World will allow him ? We were even as good down-right to profess we own no God at all ; or if we must have one, a *Baal*, or an *Asherah*, a *Nisroch*, or a *Molech*, an Oxe, or a Calf, may serve us well enough for a God ; a God to be so trampled on, or to be said unto, *stand aside*, when ever the world hath any thing for us to do.

Is there no such spiritual life, the comforts whereof are spiritual comforts, the pleasures and delights, spiritual pleasures and delights ? Are there no delights in God

God, who is a *Well of Life*, and the Fountain of all blessedness ? Have the creatures their several sweetnesſes iſſuing from them, the Sun its light, the Fire its warmth, the Fig-tree its ſweetneſs, the Olive-tree its fatneſs, the fruits of the Earth their pleaſant taſts and ſmells, the Inſtruments of Muſick their Melodious Airs and Sounds, to gratifie and pleaſe our Senſes, and is the tountain only a dry and unſavoury thing, when the Ciſterns are ſo freſh and full ? Have ſhoſhly exerciſes their ſeveral pleaſures ? Are the labours of the Husbandman, the travels of the Merchant, ſo ſtrangely ſweetned by the gain and income of them ? Are May-games and Moricedances, ſports and playes, ſo delightſome to men, that they will ſell their ſouls for ſuch pleaſures ? And are they the Exerciſes of Religion only, that have no juice nor ſweetneſs in them ? Is it Godlineſs only that hath no bud, the ſtalk whereof yeilds no meat ? Or are the delights and comforts hereof ſuch ſhaſhy and airy things, that we cannot tell when we taſte them, whether we be awake or in a dream ? Once more conſider the Scriptures, *How excellent is thy loving kindneſs, O God, therefore the children of men put their truſt under the ſhadow of thy wings : They ſhall be abundantly ſatiſfied with the fatneſs of thy houſe, and thou ſhalt make them drink of the Rivers of thy pleaſures ; for with thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light ſhall we ſee light. Delight thy ſelf alſo in the Lord, and he ſhall give thee thy hearts deſire. Thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart, more then in the time when their Corn and Wine increaſed : with joy ſhall they draw water out of the wells of Salvation. Whom having not ſeen, ye love ; in whom, though now ye ſee him not, yet believing ye rejoyce with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory. The peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding, keep your hearts. Let him that readeth, underſtand ; do all theſe ſpeak the life of Saints to be ſuch a dry, dark, and unpleaſant life ?*

Let me further ask you these two Questions?

1. Are there any delights in Heaven? is there any joy before the Throne, and in the face of God? Are there any pleasures at his right hand? Doth the Tree of life, that stands in the midst of the Paradise of God, yeild any pleasant fruit? Doth the Chrystal River that runs through the City of God, yeild any pleasant streams? Are the exercises of glory, blessings, praising, and singings, *Hallelujah, Hallelujah*, are there any pleasures in these? Speak sinners, what do you think, are there any delights in Heaven?

2. Is there not something of that heavenly joy and delight let down to the Saints here? Whilst they bear a part in the same exercises, have they not a little share in the same pleasure? What means then the *earnest of their inheritance*, which is given here? The Apostle tells *Eph. 1. 13, 14.* That the Saints after they had believed, were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance. An *earnest* is a part of that, whereof it is an earnest given in hand; The earnest of our inheritance it is a part of the inheritance.

Believe it sinners, God's *Earnest* is no *Jest*. God will not mock his Saints, though you do. As sinners to their cost, so Saints to their comfort, feel that Gods *Earnest* is in *Earnest*.

As the Lord sometimes (though more seldom) causes some flashings of his wrath to flye out in the faces, to kindle in the souls, and burn in the bowels of some incorrigable sinners, as an earnest of those everlasting flames prepared for them, beginning their Hell upon Earth, so doth he let fall some handfulls of that Harvest, some drops of that new Wine, the fuller draughts whereof are reserved to that time, when they shall sit down with him in his kingdom; and this is the earnest of their inheritance, something of the same joyes, the same

same pleasures (for kind) with those that are laid up for them, and hereby assured to them. And is there not yet enough to convince you ?

If you will still hold your own, and go about to persuade us, that all this is but fancy, we must give the same credit to you, that your selves would give to a man that were born blind, who had never seen either Sun nor Star, and hearing you to discourse of them, should laugh at you for *Phanaticks*, and tell you there were no such things as Sun or Stars, or Light; you would believe your own eyes before the blind mans blind confidence, you would pity rather then credit him, and so must we you.

Do ye not wonder there should be such things, and you not see them? The *Riches* of Christians are *hidden riches*: The *Manna* of Saints is *hidden Manna*; the *white Stone* and the *new Name* are not within the ken of vulgar eyes: Think not it is our pride or vanity thus to speak: Doth not our Lord say the same things? *Rev. 2. 17. No man knoweth it but he that bath it. A stranger shall not meddle with his joy.* The sweetness of Religion lyes deep, the rich Wines are in the Cellar, the rich Mines are in the bowels of the earth; the best of sin is in sight, the Flower and the Cream is at the top, and the Bran and the Lees is at the bottom: sin is honey at the mouth, but wormwood in the belly. Sinner, you have not gone deep enough in Religion, to come to the pleasure of it: And will you therefore say, there is none in it? You may as well say, there is no gall and wormwood in sin, because you have not yet met with a bitter drop; that all the anguish, and horror, that all those pangs of misery, those gnawing, and grindings, and torments that are said to be in sin, are mere fancies, because you have not yet felt them. But stay a while, you are not yet at the bottom, the

ground dregs are yet some draughts lower ; Oh, the underground fruits of sin ! When these shall come up, then you shall taste what gall and gravel there is in it ; never think you are secure from sorrow, a draught or two deeper may confute you with a witness. And so on the other side, there is no ground to suspect that the sweetness of Religion is a nothing, because some smatterers about it, which have only trifled upon the surface and outside of it, have not had the least taste of any such thing. The brackishness and bitterness of Religion is at top, the best is at the bottom ; the Wine-Cellar is lower then yet you have gone : if you would be perswaded to go deeper, to set in more closely and thoroughly with a godly life, your own senses would at length confute your censures ; and what ever you have heard spoken concerning the comforts and delights of holiness, you would say with the Queen of Sheba, *The one half was not told me.*

We will freely grant you ; That all is not Gold that glisters ; there are false fires, false joyes, false comforts, which many pretenders to Christianity have boasted of, who yet have had no part *nor lot in this matter* ; and to such as these, both Saints and Sinners have been but little beholding. The calumnies that light upon them, and the blindness that abides on these, lie much upon the score of such false lights ; but because some men dream they are eating and drinking, or that they are rich, and making merry, will you therefore that are eating, or drinking, or rich, or rejoycing, conclude that you also are but in a dream ? Because that there are Comets that shine amongst the Stars, are they all Comets ? Are there no Stars ? Because there are Glow worms that shine is the Sun but a Glow-worm ?

Shall I add one word more ? You that yet hold the same tune, and still cry out Fancy, Fancy, all is but fancy ; tell me, that I may know that you are in earnest
and

and believe your own talk, tell me, dare any of you come and subscribe this with your hand; *This godliness which you have been here commending to me, with all its comforts, joys and delights, I do utterly renounce for ever; let me never know what any thing of this means, nor have any part hereafter with the godly people.* Dare you put your hand to this? It's some comfort to us to hope that Religion hath such an Advocate in the consciences of its Adversaries.

But if it have not, yet know sinners, That wisdom shall be justified of her Children. And as for you, Beware lett that time come upon you, which is spoken of by one of the Prophets, *Behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your dayes, which you will in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.*

The Application of the whole.

Use 1. **H**AVING thus, by the help of God, vindicated the good wayes of the Lord from the Cavils and Reproaches of unreasonable men; and proved to you in this, and the precedent discourse, That the precious Christians are the wisest men: and that the Godliness which is cryed down for Folly and Fancy, is undoubtedly, and indispenfably necessary to salvation: I shall now take you by the hand, and lead you on (as many of you as are willing to follow me) to the practise of it. And in this undertaking I shall apply my self,

1. To the Ungodly.
2. To the Godly.

1. I shall speak a few words to the Ungodly. Speak now, O ye foolish sinners, Is Godliness of God? Is

Is Christianity of Christ, or is it not? Is holiness the way of life, or can you hope to see life without it? If you say it is not of God, and will stand to it, produce your cause, bring forth your strong reasonings; only I must tell you, if you say any thing, you had need look to it, that it be something of weight that you alledge in a matter of such importance, ere you do conclude against it.

Let your Consciences speak, for to them (if you will forbear consulting with lust) I dare now appeal; let your Consciences speak, whose voice is this; *See that you walk circumspectly. Strait is the Gate, and narrow is the way that leads to life. God hath set apart him that is godly for himself: Follow holiness, without which no man shall see God.* Speak sinner, whose words are these? And what do *Precisians* speak more, or other then this? Dare you say concerning the way of Life, as it hath been described to you, *If this be godliness, let me never see God; I'll never see life, if this be the only way to it.*

But if your Consciences tell you, This is of God, this strait and narrow way is the only way of life, then, consider what is that you have done, whom is it that you have reproached? Mean you still to hold your course be it wright or wrong, come life, come death?

Is there any among you, whose heart smites him on the mouth, and whispers him thus in the ear, *Blasphemy thou God? Revilest thou his Servants? And wilt thou still go on to pervert the good wayes of the Lord?* Is there any among you that doth enquire, what must I do to get into this way of life? Let such of you hearken unto me, whilst I give you these following directions.

Consider that I am now a dealing with you about your entrance upon a godly life; my present business is to help you over the threshold, to get you within the straight gate; you must first be Christians ere you can fo

ow Christ ; you must first enter into the strait gate, ere you can walk on in the narrow way. Now if ever you would attain to the beginning of Godliness, take this course.

I. Get these three principles to be deeply fixed in our hearts.

1. That the things which are eternal, are unspeakably more considerable then the things which are but temporal.

2. That things not seen, are as infallibly certain, as the things which are seen.

3. That according to your present choice, must be our Eternal Lot.

1. *That the things which are Eternal, are unspeakably more considerable then the things which are but temporal.* It's nothing so considerable what men enjoy, or suffer in this world, as what they shall enjoy, or may suffer in the world to come. There are good things Temporal, and good things Eternal; and there are evil things Temporal, and evil things Eternal; the good things Temporal, are Meat, and Drink, and Money, and Clothes, and ease, and Pleasures, and Credit, &c. And the good things eternal, are Glory, and Joy, and Rest, everlasting blessedness : the evil things Temporal, are the sufferings, the losses and wants, the sorrow and shame, and scorn, and torments that men fall under, or lye under in this life ; the evil things in the world to come, are in one word, the vengeance of Eternal Fire.

The good things, and the evil things of this life, are more perceptible, having the advantages of their presence, and obviousness to our senses ; the good things, and the evil things to come, are less understood, having the disadvantage of their distance, and those Clouds that do yet keep them out of sight, and hereupon these are slighted and despised, and these are looked up-

on as the only considerable things ; till men be set right in their apprehensions of these things, it will be a vain and fruitless attempt to perswade them to Christ ; mistakes and misapprehensions here, are the grounds of mens miscarriages.

The difficulty of perswading sinners to Christ, lies mainly here ; there is so much to be lost, and left for Christ, there is so much to be suffered and undergone, so much labour, so much hardship and trouble, that they cannot see how Christianity and godliness can ever make them amends for what they are like to suffer : they will not be made sensible, that the things Eternal will ballance the things that are before them ; they will not easily be perswaded, but they shall be great losers by hearkening to Christ : Now whence is it that men are thus foolish ? If they did but clearly understand and were deeply affected with the vast difference that is betwixt the vain glory of the World, and the weight of that glory that is to come : betwixt the light afflictions of this life, and the astonishing torments of the other world, they would sure be of another mind ; the great objections against godliness, would then be all answered, and removed.

Thou saist, sinner, it's heard to part with thine ease, thy pleasure, and thy liberty, and thy carnal contentments and delights, which if thou wilt follow Christ thou seest must all go. But how wilt thou bear it, to be shut out of the everlasting Kingdome, to be shut out from the presence of God ? Art thou indeed of the mind of that Atheist, that said, *He would not leave his part of Paris, for his part in Paradise* ? Thou canst not endure the trouble and persecution of this world, but how wilt thou endure the torments and plagues of the other World ; Oh, if thou wert but sensible, what that exceeding eternal weight of glory is, what thou wilt find ev
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lasting death and darkness to be; then what insignificant things would all things that are now before thee appear to be! Satan would then want arguments to dissuade sinners from Christ, his tempting trade would quickly grow to be a poor trade, if the concerns of Eternity were clearly understood, and duly regarded.

When the Lord hath once shewed you the wonderful things of Eternity, *the true riches, the enduring substance, the lasting joys, his rivers of pleasures*, together with the *worms that never dyeth, and the fire that never shall be quenched*: When the Lord hath shewed you what a Heaven he hath prepared for the Saints, what an Oven he hath prepared for sinners, then neglect Christ if you can; then neglect holiness if you dare; then look down & see what poor contemptible things the pleasures and the sufferings here below will appear to be. Oh study things Eternal more; lanch forth into these deeps, dwell upon the meditation of them, till your hearts, and all that is within you, acknowledge and confess, That things present are nothing to things to come.

2. *That the things that are not seen, are as infallibly certain as the things that are seen.*

There is much Atheism and Infidelity in the hearts of men, and more then they are aware of; if they do not peremptorily conclude there are no such things yet, are there not many whose hearts do question at least, Whether there be any such things or no? We have read, and heard of another world, but no mortal ever saw it; who ever hath ascended up to Heaven, and hath brought us word what he hath seen there? Who ever hath descended into the deep, and brought us up tidings thence? It may be there may be no such matter as another world; If we could speak with one that hath been there, that would be something to assure us. But what if it appear, that you may have as great certainty

tainty of these things, as if one should rise from the
 dead, and come and tell you ? Do not the Scriptures tell
 you of such things ? The Scriptures are a sure word
 and there is unquestionable evidence of the truth of
 what they speak ; and you have as great reason to be-
 lieve them, as you had the testimony of one raised
 from the dead ; *Luk. 16. 31. They have Moses and the*
Prophets, if they will not hear them, neither will they
be persuaded though one rise from the dead. Beloved,
 if you should see before your eyes, persons rising from
 the dead ; if one should come down from Heaven, and
 come in here into this Congregation, in all his glorious
 Robes, with his Palm in his hand, his Crown on his
 head, the joy and glory of the Lord shining forth in his
 face, and should declare to you the wonderful things
 that his eyes had seen, and his heart had been satisfied
 and ravished with in the presence of God. If you should
 see another coming out of the deep, with his chains of
 darkness upon him, with the smell of that Infernal Fire
 and Brimstone about him, with the print of the Dra-
 gons Claws appearing in his flesh, and the blackness of
 that smoking furnace sticking on his face, and hideously
 roaring out the anguish he felt burning in his bowels
 and should tell you, This is the state of them that know
 not God. If you should see two such sights appearing
 this hour here in the midst of you, Would you not think
 you had reason to believe there were an Heaven and a
 Hell ? This word which is before you, is a far greater
 and more certain evidence, then if tidings were thus
 brought to you by persons rising from the dead. And
 you will not give credit to this Testimony of God, nei-
 ther would you give credit to any such Testimony. Sin-
 ners believe God, and believe him who was once on
 earth, and now daily speaks to you from Heaven ; be-
 lieve that Word which is before you, in which appear

such beames of Divine Light, such an impress of Divine Purity, which hath been so attested by a Divine Power, in mighty signs and Wonders, that you may as well question whether the Sun hath Light, as whether his Word hath Truth: believe this Word to be certain, and then question if you can, whether the things not seen are certain or no.

Let these two things sink into your hearts, (sinners) be once settled and established in your hearts, about the importance, and about the truth and certainty of these Eternal things, and then you are gotten fairly onward in your way towards Christ, and a Godly life.

If men were as sure that there is an Heaven and an Hell, such unspeakable glory, and such intollerable misery, and an Eternity of both; if men were sure of this, and did as verily believe it, as they are sure of what their eyes have seen, and their ears have heard, and their hands have handled, what a flying would there be out of the way of Death and Hell, and what a flocking would there be into the way of life? Half the work of Preachers, and the hardest half (their perswading work) would then be at an end: There would be as much knocking at their doors for counsel, as now there is at sinners doors for acceptance.

Oh Brethren, if you were more brought to this pass, your unbelief were removed, your darkness taken away, your eyes opened to see these marvellous things unquestionable truths, would you then scoff at pureness? would you then mock at godliness? would you then slight reproofs? or need any further conviction of your folly? You would have an admonisher within you, a Remembrancer within you, a Reprover within you, your own Consciences would plead with you for your entertaining of Christ, and embracing his word, and would continually cry in your ears, Why meanest thou,

thou, O fool? Dost thou not see a Kingdom before thee, which may be thine, and art thou willing to lose it? Dost thou see that gulph of misery and perdition, with open mouth gaping for thee to devour thee? Arise sluggard, look to thy self, least thou be undone before thou art aware.

That according to your (choice) in this World your, (lot) must be for ever in the world to come.

Your chusing or refusing Christ and his holy wayes, is that which doth determine your Eternal state; chuse Christ, and you make Heaven sure to you; refuse Christ here, and you will be rejected of him for ever.

God doth offer you this choice, either the *strait and the narrow way*, with that life of blessedness which is at the farther end of this way; or the *broad way*, with that death and destruction to which it leads: *Christ with his Yoak, his Cross, and his Eternal Crown, or the Devil with his Golden Mines, his Paradise, and Eternal Prison*, and all the parts of each of these offers, are linked together; Chuse the Devil's Golden mines, and Paradise, and you must have his Prison too. Take Christ's Yoak, and his Cross, and you shall have his Crown: you cannot take the Devil's Paradise, and Christ's Crown; if you will have his Pleasure, you must have his Prison. You cannot obtain life, but you must chuse the narrow way that leads to it.

Here is the choice, sinners, that God puts you to, this is the business of this world, to chuse for Eternity; and that which is the business of this life, is the business of this hour. This very little peice of your time, and the choice you make now, may be it that will give a final determination what your eternal state shall be; if you make an evil choice now, you may never have a minute time to chuse again for ever. Oh, if your hearts were sensible of this, That there is so much depending upon

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every hour of your lives, as *Life or Death, Heaven or Hell, Eternity* : Sure you could not but reason thus with your selves ; Is it a time for me to stand all the day idle ? to be laughing, or sporting, or to be drudging and scraping for the muck of the earth ? Is this time for me to stand trifling with Christ, and the Gospel, to make so many delays, to make so many excuses ! *The terms are too high, the way is too strait, the yoke is too heavy, this I cannot part with, that I cannot bring my heart to subscribe to ?* Is this the business that is now under debate, what my everlasting state must be ? In which of the two Regions of Eternity my lot shall fall ; whether I shall be a Saint or a Devil, a vessel of honour, or a vessel of wrath ? whether my dwelling shall be in everlasting blessedness, or in everlasting burnings ? Which way the scales do turn now, either for Christ or the world, do they turn for everlasting ? Sure, if matters stand thus, I had need be serious, and consider what I do. This is the first direction, get these three principles fixed in your hearts ; that things eternal are much more considerable then things temporal ; that things not seen are as infallibly certain as the things that are seen ; that upon your present choice depends your eternal lot. Chuse Christ and his wayes, and you are blessed for ever ; refuse, and you are undone for ever. And then,

II. *Make your choice.*

Put your hearts to it, to turn either to the right hand, or to the left ; lay both parts before you, with every link of each, Christ with his Yoke, his Cross, and his Crown ; for the Devil with his wealth, his pleasure, and his curse. And then put your selves to it thus : Soul, thou seest what is before thee, which wilt thou do ? Which wilt thou have, either the Crown or the Curse ? If thou chuse the Crown, remember that the day thou takest this thou must be content to submit to the

Cross and Yoak, the service and the sufferings of Christ which are linked to it. What saist thou? hadst thou rather take the gains and pleasures of sin, and venture on the Curse? or wilt thou yeild thy self a servant unto Christ, and so make sure the Crown?

If your hearts fly off, and would fain wave the business, and leave it undetermined, leave them not so. If you be only unresolved, you are resolved: If you remain undetermined for Christ, you are determined for the Devil. Therefore give not off, but follow your hearts from day to day, let them not rest till the matter be brought to an issue, and see that you make a good choice.

This is your choosing the good part, God and your blessedness of the World to come, for your portion and happiness; and in this is included, your renouncing the World, and a worldly happiness.

III. *Imbarque with Christ.*

Adventure your selves with him, cast your selves upon his righteousness, as that which shall bring you to God: As a poor captive Exile that is cast upon a strange land, a land of Robbers and murtherers, where he is ready to perish, and having no hope, either of abiding there, or escaping home with life, and meeting at length with a Pilot, that offers to transport him safely home, imbarks with him, and ventures himself, and all he hath, in his Vessel: Do you likewise; You are exiles from the presence of God, and fallen into a land of Robbers and Murtherers. Your sins are Robbers, your pleasures are Robbers, your companions in sin are Robbers and Thieves: if you stay where you are you perish, and escape home of your selves you cannot. Christ offers; if you will venture with him, he will bring you home, and he will bring you to God: Will you say now to him, Lord Jesus, wilt thou undertake for me, wilt thou bring me to God, bring me
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into the Land of promise? With thee will I venture my self, I cast my self upon thee, upon thy blood, upon thy righteousness, upon thy faithfulness, I lay up all my hopes, and venture my whole interest, soul and body, with thee.

This is your closing with Christ as your Priest, and in this is included your renouncing your own righteousness; you can never, you will never cast your selves on him alone, till all your self-hopes have given up the Ghost.

There be *two things* which must necessarily be supposed to a sinners coming to Christ.

1. *A deep sense of his sin and misery.*
2. *An utter despair of himself, and all things else beside Christ.*

1. *A deep sense of his sin and misery*: No man will regard a Saviour, that doth not see himself a sinner, the whole regard not the Physician. Therefore it is said, that the Spirit of God, when he should come, to Christianize the world, should in the first place convince the world of sin, *Joh. 16. 8*. He shall convince the world of sin, he shall demonstrate them sinners, bring up their sins before their eyes, bring home their sins upon their consciences, and make them see themselves, and feel themselves the most vile and abominable of creatures: Sin hides it self from the sinners eyes, and all its filthiness and deformity; or if it come in sight, it presents it self to the sinner as the Witch of *Endor* brought up the Devil before *Saul* in *Samuels* mantle; it shews it self as the sinners God: Look how many sin evil men have, so many gods they have rising up to them. Their sins are their gods, the gods that feed them, they make a living of their sins: the gods that comfort and refresh them, they take pleasure in iniquity; the Gods that shelter them and hide them, they strengthen themselves in their wickedness: But now the Spirit of God

plucks off the Mantle, and makes sin appear to be sin; makes all the sinners gods, appear to be so many Devils: brings forth the blackness and filthiness of sin into sight; makes the sinner to see himself an unclean and abominable thing. And withall he brings forth the guilt of sin, sets all these Devils tormenting the sinner, filling him with fear and terrour, and amazement. In this respect he is called, *Rom. 8.* the Spirit of Bondage, that works fear and trouble in the heart: The spirit awakening a sleepy sinner, is a kind of awakening in Hell. Lord, where am I! What mean these Legions round about me? These Chains and Fetters that are upon me? What means that black Roll before mine eyes, of Curses and Wrath, and Woes! Lord, where am I! Have I been playing, and sporting, and making merry; and my soul in such a case as this! But is there no hope of escaping out of this wretched state? I see there is no abiding thus; I am but a dead man if I continue as I am; What may I do to be saved?

And when he is brought to this, there is some way made for his entertainment of Christ: Yet this is not all that is needful; but he must further be brought to
 2. *An utter despair of himself, and all things else besides Christ.* Being made sensible of his sin and his danger, a sinner will look out for help and deliverance; but he will look every where else, before he will look unto Christ: Nothing will bring in a sinner to Christ, but an absolute necessity: He will try to forsake his sins, will think of leaving his drunkenness, and becoming sober, of leaving his adulteries, and becoming chaste, and so see if by this means he may not escape: He will go to Prayers, and Sermons, and Sacraments, & search out if there be not salvation in them: but all these, though they be useful in their places, yet looking no further, the sinner sees there is no help in them: His righteousness cannot help him, this is but rags: his duties

ties cannot help him, these may be reckoned among his sins : Ordinances cannot help, these are but empty Cisterns : and all tell him, you knock at a wrong door, salvation is not in us. Well, the Lord be merciful to me, saith the sinner, What shall I do ? Abide as I am, I dare not ; and how to help my self I know not ; my praying will not help me, my hearing will not help me : if I give all my goods to the poor, if I should give my body to be burned, all this would not save my soul. Wo is me, what shall I do, and whither shall I go ? And now, being brought to this distress, to this utter loss, his despair drives him to the only door of hope that is left open. Then Christ will be accepted, when he sees none but Christ can stand him. The Apostle tells us, *Gal. 3. 23. We were kept under the Law, shut up unto the faith that should afterwards be revealed* : All other doors were shut up against us ; there was no hope of escaping but by that one door that was left open. *The Faith that was afterwards to be revealed*. As the besieged in a City, that have every Gate blocked up, and but one difficult Passage left open by which there is any possibility of escaping ; thither they throng for the saving of their lives ; they are shut up unto that door, to which (if there had been any other way open) they would never have come.

And as Christ will never be accepted ; so can the sinner never be received of him, till he let go all other props, and trust on him alone. Christ will have no sharer with him in the work of saving souls : *If ye seek me, let these go their way* ; as he said in another case : Let not only your sins go, but let your righteousness go, all the refuges of lyes wherein you have trusted ; let all go if you will have me to be a refuge to you. I came not to call the Righteous ; if I sho I I, they would not come ; or if they come, let them go as they come, let them go to their righteousness in which they trust ;

and let naked destitute sinners, distressed sinners come to me, who am come to this end, to seek and to save them that are lost.

Sinners, Will you come now ? Will you venture here ? For this your adventuring on Christ, you have this threefold warrant :

1. God's Ordination. This is he whom God the Father hath appointed, and sent into the world, to help and bring back his exiles to himself, to save sinners. This is he whom God the Father hath sealed, *John 6. 27.* hath mark'd him out for that chosen person, in whom is Salvation; hath sealed him his Commis- sion, for the Redeeming and Reconciling the world to himself. As God said unto the three friends of *Job*, when he was angry with them, *Job 42. 8.* Go to my servant *Job*, and he shall offer sacrifice for you, he shall pray for you, for him will I accept. So to sinners, Go, saith the Lord, to my servant *Jesus*, he shall offer sacrifice for you, he shall make reconciliation for you, *Isa. 42. 1.* Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine Elect in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgement to the Gentiles.

2. Gods Command, *1 John. 3. 23.* This is his Command- ment, that we should believe on the name of his Son *Jesus Christ*.

3. The promise of God, *1 Pet. 2. 9.* Behold I lay in *Sion* a chief Corner stone, elect, precious; He that believeth on him, shall not be confounded.

Now having this threefold warrant, the warrant of Gods Ordination, Command and Promise; you may be bold to adventure on Christ, and to apply your selves to him thus; Lord *Jesus*, here I am a poore Captive exile, a lost Creature, an enemy to God, under his wrath and curse; Wilt thou Lord undertake for me, reconcile me to God, and save my soul? do not Lord refuse me; for if you refuse me, to whom then shall I go

Art not thou he, and he alone, whom God the Father hath sealed, the Saviour of sinners? The Lord God hath sent me to thee, hath bid me come, he hath commanded me to believe, and cast my self upon thee, Lord Jesus, wilt thou refuse to help a distressed creature, whom the Father hath sent to thee for thy help? If I had come on my own head, or in my own name, thou mightst well have put me back: but since I come at the command of the Father, reject me not; Lord help me, Lord save me. Art thou not he, concerning whom the Father hath promised, *He that believeth on him shall not be confounded!* I come Lord, I believe Lord, I throw my self upon thy blood and mercy; I cast my self upon thy blood and bowels; do not refuse me, I have no whither else to go: here I'll stay, I will not stir from thy door; on thee I'll trust, and rest, and venture my self; God hath laid my help on thee, and on thee I'll lay my hope for pardon, for life, for salvation: if I perish, I'll perish on thy shoulders; if I sink, I'll sink in thy Vessel: if I die I'll die at thy door; bid me not go away, for I will not go.

IV. *Resign and deliver up your selves to God in Christ.*

2 Chron. 30. 8. *Yield your selves to the Lord; that is, as his servants, give up the dominion and government of your selves to Christ, Rom. 6. 13. Neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield your selves to God, as those that are alive from the dead; and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God, 1 Cor. 6. To whom ye yield your selves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey.* Yield your selves so to the Lord, that you may henceforth be the Lords; *I am thine*, saith the Psalmist, *Psal. 119.* Those that yield themselves to sin and the World, their hearts say, *Sin, I am thine, World, I am thine, Riches, I am yours; Pleasures, I am yours. I am thine*, saith the Psalmist, devoted to thy service, dedicated to thy service: *I am thine, save me: Give*

your selves to Christ, sinners ; be devoted to his fear.

And this giving your selves to him, must be such, as supposes that you be heartily contented,

1. That he appoint you your work.

2. That he appoint you your station.

1. That he appoint you your work ; that he put you to whatsoever he pleaseth ; servants, as they must do their Masters work, so they must do that work which their Master appoints them, they must be for any work their Master hath for them to do : they must not pick and choose ; this I will do, and that I will not do : they must not say, This is too hard, or this is too mean, or this may be well enough let alone. Good servants, when they have chosen their Master, will let their Master choose their work, and will not dispute his will, but do it.

Christ hath many services to be done ; some are more easie and honourable, others more difficult and disgraceful ; some are suitable to our inclinations and interests, others are contrary to both : In some we may please Christ, and please our selves, as when he requires us to feed and cloath our selves, to provide things honest for our own maintenance ; yea, and there are some spiritual duties that are more pleasing then others ; as to rejoyce in the Lord, to be blessing and praising of God, to be feeding our selves with the delights and comforts of Religion ; these are the sweet works of a Christian. But then, there are other works, wherein we cannot please Christ, but by denying our selves ; as giving and lending bearing and forbearing, reproving men for their sins, withdrawing from their societies, witnessing against their wickedness, owning and confessing Christ and his Name, when 'twill cost us shame and reproach ; sailing against the wind, swimming against the tyde, steering contrary to the temper and disposition of the times ; pinch-

pinching upon the flesh, parting with our ease, our liberties, relations, and accommodations, for the Name of our Lord Jesus, with much work of this kind.

Its necessary beloved, to sit down and consider, *what it will cost you to be the Servants of Christ*, and take a through survey of the whole business of Christianity, and not engage hand over head to you know not what.

First, see what 'tis that Christ doth expect, and then yeild your selves to his whole will : Do not think of intending and compounding, or making your own terms with Christ ; that will never be allowed you.

Go to Christ, and tell him, Lord J-hus, If thou wilt receive me into thine house, if thou wilt but own me as thy servant, I will not stand upon terms ; impose on me what condition thou pleasest, write down thine own Articles, command me what thou wilt, put me to any thing thou see'st good, let me come under thy roof, let me be thy servant, and spare not to command me ; I will be no longer mine own, but give up my self to thy will in all things.

2. That he shall appoint you your station and condition ; whether it be higher or lower, plentiful, or a wanting, a prosperous, or an afflicted estate : Be content, that Christ should both choose your work, and choose your condition ; that he should have the command of you, and the disposal of you ; make me what thou wilt. Lord, and set me where thou wilt ; let me be a Vessel of Silver, or Gold, or a Vessel of Wood or Stone, so I be a Vessel of Honour : of whatsoever form or metal, whether higher or lower, finer or coarser, I am content ; if I be not the head, or the eye, or the ear, one of the noble or more honourable instruments thou wilt imploy, let me be the hand, or the foot, one of the most laborious, and lowest, and most contemptible of all the servants of my Lord ; let my

my dwelling be on the dunghil, my portion in the wilderness, my name and my lot be among the hewers of wood, or drawers of water, among the door-keepers of thy house; any where, where I may be serviceable and useful, I put my self wholly into thy hands: Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt, put me to doing, put me to suffering, let me be employed for thee, or laid aside for thee, exalted for thee, or trodden under foot for thee: let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing, I freely and heartily resign all to thy pleasure and disposal.

This now is your closing with Christ, as your King and Sovereign Lord: and in this is included, your renouncing the Devil and his works, the flesh and its lusts, together with your consenting to all the Laws and Ordinances of Christ, and his providential Government.

Beloved, such a close with Christ, as you have been here exhorted to, is that wherein the essence of Christianity lies: when you have chosen the incorruptible crown, that is, when you have chosen God to be your portion and happiness: when you have adventured, and laid up your whole interest, and all your hopes with Christ, casting your selves wholly upon the merit of his Righteousness; when you have understandingly and heartily resign'd and given up your selves to him, resolving for ever to be at his command, and at his disposal: then you are Christians indeed, and never till then. Christ will be the Saviour of none but of his servants: He is the Author of Eternal Salvation to those that obey him, *Heb. 5.* Christ will have no servants but by consent; His people are a willing people, *Psal. 110.* And Christ will accept of no consent; but in full, to all that he requires; he will be all in all, or he will be nothing.

Y. Confirm and compleat all this by Solemn Covenant.

Give your selves to the Lord as his servants, and bind your selves to him as his *Covenant Servants*, Jer. 30. 21. *Who is this that engageth his heart to approach unto me?* Isa. 44. 5. *One shall say, I am the Lords; another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe with his hand to the Lord.*

Upon your entring into Covenant with God, the Covenant of God stands firm to you; God gives you leave, every man to put his own name into the Covenant Grant; if it be not found there at last, it will be your own fault; if it be not there, there will be nothing found in the whole Covenant belonging unto you: If it be there, all is your; if you have come into the bond of the Covenant, you shall have your share in the blessings of the Covenant, Jer. 30. 21, 22. *Who is this that engaged his heart to approach to me? And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.* Engage to me, and I stand engaged to you, Deut. 6. 17, 18. *Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his Commandments, and his judgments, to hearken to his voice. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee.* Observe it, The same day that they avouched the Lord to be their God, the same day the Lord avouched them to be his peculiar people: The same day that they engage to keep the commandments of God, the same day the Lord engaged to keep his promise with them.

There is a two-fold Covenanting with God. In *Profession*, and in *Reality*: An entring our *Names*, and an engaging our *Hearts*: The former is done in Baptism, by all that are Baptized, who by receiving the Seal of the Covenant, are visibly, or in profession enter'd into it; The latter is twofold:

1. *Virtual*, Which is done by all those that have
sin-

sincerely made that closure with God in Christ forementioned: Those that have chosen the Lord, embarked with Christ, resigned up, and given themselves to the Lord, are all engaged persons, and have virtually covenanted with him.

2. *Formal.* Which is our binding our selves to the Lord by solemn Vow or Promise, to stand to our choice, &c. And this may be, either only inward in the soul, or outward, and expressed either by words, lifting up the hand, subscribing the hand, or the like; And by how much the more express our solemn covenanting with God is, by so much the more sensibly and strongly is it like to hold our hearts to him.

Now that which I would persuade you to, is this solemn and express covenanting with God. Providence hath lately brought to my hand the advice of a dear friend, and faithful labourer in the word of the Lord about this matter, together with an excellent Form of words, composed for the help of the weaker Christians, and aptly accommodated to all the substantialsof our *Baptismal Covenant*, which having found great acceptance with many precious Christians, I do with much Zeal, and great hope of good success, for the establishing of Souls in holiness and comfort, commend it to the use not only of young Converts, but of the more grown Christians, that have not experimented this or the like course,

And in order to the putting this matter into practice I shall first give you these few directions.

First, Set a part some time, more then once, to be spent in secret before the Lord.

1. In seeking earnestly his special assistance and gracious acceptance of you.

2. In considering distinctly all the terms or conditions of the Covenant, as they have been laid before you, in the Directions already given you, and are also expressed in the form hereafter proposed.

3. In searching your hearts, whether you either have already, or can now, freely make such a closure with God in Christ, as you have been exhorted to. In special, consider what your sins are, and examin whether you can resolve to forego them all. Consider what the Laws of Christ are, how holy, strict, and spiritual, and whether you can upon deliberation make choice of them all (even those that do most cross your worldly interests, beloved sins and corrupt inclinations) as the rule of your whole life. Be sure you be clear in these matters, see that you do not lye unto God. Consider, whether however corruption will play its part, and be pulling you back, yet the prevailing part, of you will be for God and Christ, and all his holy wayes.

Secondly, Compose your spirits into the most serious frame possible, suitable to a transaction of so high importance.

Thirdly, Lay hold on the Covenant of God, and rely upon his promise of giving grace, and strength, whereby you may be enabled to perform your promise. Trust not to your own strength, to the strength of your own resolution, but take hold on his strength.

Fourthly, resolve to be faithful. Having engaged your hearts, opened your mouths, and subscribed with your hands to the Lord, resolve in his strength never to go back.

Lastly, being thus prepared, on some convenient time set apart for the purpose, set upon the work, and in the most solemn manner possible, as if the Lord were visibly present before your eyes, fall down on your knees, and spreading forth your hands towards Heaven, open your hearts to the Lord, in these or the like words.

O Most dreadful God, for the passion of thy Son, I beseech thee accept of thy poor Prodigal, now prostrating himself at thy door. I have fallen from thee by mine iniquity, and am by Nature a son of death, and a thousand-fold

fold more the child of Hell by my wicked practice : but of thine infinite Grace thou hast promised mercy to me in Christ, if

The terms of our Communion are either from which, or to which.

The terms from which we must turn, are Sin, Satan, the World, and our own Righteousness, which must be thus re-

nounced. I will but turn to thee with all my heart : Therefore upon the call of thy Gospel, I am now come in, and throwing down my Weapons, submit my self to thy mercy. And because thou requirest, as the condition of my peace with thee, that I should put away mine Idols, and be at defiance with all thine Enemies, which I acknowledge I have wickedly sided with against thee, I here from the bottom of my heart renounce them all; freely Covenanting with thee, not to allow my self in any known sin, but conscientiously to use all the means that I know thou hast prescribed for the death and utter destruction of all my corruptions; And whereas I have formerly inordinately, and idolatrously let out my affections upon the World, I do here resign my heart to thee that makest it : humbly protesting before thy glorious Majesty, that it is the firm resolution of my heart, and that I do unfeignedly desire grace from thee, that when thou shalt call me hereunto, I may practise this my resolution, through thy assistance, to forsake all that is dear unto me in this world, rather then to turn from thee to the ways of sin; and that I will watch against all its temptations, whether of prosperity or adversity, lest they should withdraw my heart from the beseeching thee also to help me against the temptations of Satan, to whose wicked suggestions, I resolve, by thy grace, never to yield my self a servant unto sin. And because my own righteousness is but menstruous rags, I renounce all confidence therein, and acknowledge that I am of my self a hopeless, helpless, undone creature, without righteousness or strength.

The terms to which we must turn, are either ultimate or mediate.

And forasmuch as thou hast of thy bottomless mercy offered most graciously to me wretched sinner, to be again my God through Christ, if I would accept

of thee, I call heaven and earth to record this day, that I do here solemnly avouch thee for the Lord my God; and with all possible veneration, bowing the neck of my soul under the feet of thy most

The ultimate is God, the Father, Son, and holy Ghost, who must be thus accepted.

sacred Majesty, I do here take thee the Lord Jehovah, Father, Son, and holy Ghost, for my portion and chief Good; and do give up my self, body and soul, for thy servant: promising and resolving to serve thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.

And since thou hast appointed the Lord Jesus Christ, the only means of coming unto thee, I do here upon the extended knees of my soul, accept of him as the only new and living way by which sinners may have access to

The mediate terms, are either principal or less principal.

The principal is Christ the Mediator who must thus be embraced.

thee, and do here solemnly joyn my self in a marriage Covenant to him.

O blessed Jesus, I come to thee hungry and hardly bestead, poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked, a most loathsome polluted wretch, a guilty condemned malefactor, unworthy for ever to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord, much more to be solemnly married to the King of glory; but sith such is thine unparalleled love, I do here with all my power accept thee, and do take thee for my head, and husband, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, for all times and conditions, to love and honour, and obey thee before all others, and this is to the death. I embrace thee in all thy offices: I renounce mine own worthiness; and do here avow thee to be the Lord, my righteousness; I renounce mine own wisdom, and do here take thee for mine only guide; I renounce mine own will, and take thy word for my Law.

And since thou hast told me that I must suffer if I will reign, I do here covenant with thee to take my lot as it falls with thee, and with thy grace assisting, to run all hazards with thee, verily supposing, that neither life nor death shall part between thee and me.

And

The less principal are the Laws of Christ, which must be thus observed.

And because thou hast been pleased to give me thy holy Laws, as the rule of my life; and the way in which I should walk to thy kingdom: I do here willingly put my neck under thy yoke, and set my shoulder to thy burden, and subscribing to all thy Laws, as holy, just, and good, I solemnly take them, as the rule of my words, thoughts and actions; promising that though my flesh contradict and rebel, yet I will endeavour to order and govern my whole life according to thy direction; and will not allow myself in the neglect of any thing that I know to be my duty.

Only because through the frailty of my flesh, I am subject to many failings; I am bold humbly to protest, That unallowed miscarriages, contrary to the settled bent and resolution of my heart, shall not make void this Covenant; for so thou hast said.

Now Almighty God, searcher of hearts, thou knowest that I make this Covenant with thee this day, without any known guile or reservation, beseeching thee, that if thou espie'st any flaw or falshood therein thou wouldst discover it to me, and bid me to do it aright.

And now glory be unto thee O God the Father, whom I shall be bold from this day forward, to look upon as my God and Father; that ever thou should'st find out such a way for the recovery of undone sinners. Glory be to thee, O God the Son, who hast loved me, and washed me from my sins in thine own blood, and art now become my Saviour and Redeemer. Glory be to thee, O God the Holy Ghost, who by the finger of thine Almighty power, hast turned about my heart from sin to God.

O dreadful Jehovah, the Lord God omnipotent, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, thou art now become my Covenant friend; and I through thine infinite grace am become thy Covenant-servant. Amen, So be it: And the Covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in Heaven.

The Author's Advice.

THis Covenant I advise you to make, not only in heart, but in word; not only in word, but in Writing; and that you would with all possible reverence spread the Writing before the Lord, as if you would present it to him as your act and deed; And when you have done this, set your hand to it; keep it as a memorial of the solemn Transactions that have passed between God and you, that you may have recourse to it in doubts and temptations.

And now beloved, having shewed you the way to the Father, give me leave to be instant with you, in pressing you to hearken to me herein, to come and joyn your selves thus to the Lord. And if you will not be perswaded to this solemn and express way of Covenanting with him, (which I believe you will find a great advantage, and do therefore make it my great request unto you) yet, if you will not do that, take heed you refuse not to engage your hearts to the Lord, and make a full closure with Christ upon all the particular terms laid before you; till that be done, I must be bold to tell you again, as I have told you already, that you are short of Christianity, strangers from the Covenant of Promise, and Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel. Brethren, the Lord God hath sent me amongst you upon the same Errand, as Abraham sent his servant, Gen. 24. To take a wife for his Son, to espouse you to Christ: I am not without fear, as that servant was not, that some of you will not follow me; but if the Lord see it good to send his Angel before me to make my way prosperous, if the Lord give me success in this great thing, that I may thus bring you into Covenant with him, I shall therein have performed the main part of my Ministerial work among you, I shall have espoused you to Christ, married you to that one Husband; I shall have brought you within the straight gate; and

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set your foot safe into that narrow way that leads to life, and have laid the foundation of your following the Lord in holiness and comfort here, and of living with him in blessedness for ever. For,

1. When once you are sincerely in Covenant, from thenceforth you have a God that you may call your own, to whom you may have free access, with whom you may be sure to find grace to help in all times of need. How blessed is his condition, who is able to say, I have no friend in the world, but I have a God in Heaven; I have many enemies, but I have a God; I have no house, nor money, nor lands, but I have a God; I have troubles, I have sins that are a daily torment and vexation to me, but I have a God, a God to feed me, a God to succour me, a God to shelter me, a God to pardon me, a God to sanctify me, to save me.

2. From the time of this your Covenant-Union with Christ, you have the blessing of communion with him.

Whatsoever is Christ's, is now become yours; the husband gives his wife leave to set her name on all his goods; and all that Christ hath, you may now write your name upon it, and say boldly, *All this is mine*, his prayers, his tears, his obedience, his blood, his spirit, all are mine, because he is mine.

2. Whatsoever is yours, is his; your sufferings, your sins, your debts, your wants are all upon your husband. Christ says to you, as the old man, *Judg. 19, 20* to the Levite, *Let all thy wants be on me*; and so all thy debts, and straits, and fears, and troubles, let them all be on me.

3. Christ and you shall have your lot together; God deals with Christ and a believer, as one and the same party, who must be absolved or condemned, stand or fall, live or dye together. In Christ's being justified, your justification is secured: In Christ's Resurrection, your Resurrection, in Christ's Glorification, your Glorification is secured.

cured for ever; *Because I live, ye shall live also.* This is the portion, this is the Inheritance of all Gods Covenanting Servants. You that are yet in your sins, in your old covenant with Death, and agreement with Hell; Will you yet be perswaded by what hath been said, to say one to another, *Come let us break these bands under, and cast these cords from us; come let us go over to Christ; we joy in our selves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant that never shall be forgotten.* You that are sincerely come with the bonds of this Covenant of the Lord, the Lord is henceforth become your God, Christ is henceforth become your Saviour, you have shot the Gulf; that good work is begun, which the Lord will perform to the day of Christ, you are gotten within the Gate, you are entered into the Path of Life.

2. In the next place therefore, I shall give some advice to the godly, or those that are already in Christ, whom I shall direct: 1. To a right performance of holy duties, these four duties especially, Prayer, holy Meditation, or Self-examination, and renewing their Covenant. 2. To a right improvement of holy Duties. 3. To carrying on an holy course. In all which, though I will apply my self especially to those that are in Christ, I shall also give some farther helps to those that are out of Christ. Before I shall enter upon the directions, for the right performance of holy duties, it will not, I hope, be lost labour, if I prefix a word of encouragement to duty, by laying before you the influences, which holy duties will have upon the carrying on a holy life, which I shall dispatch in these four particulars.

1. *Duties are the exercise of Grace.* Grace out of exercise grows quickly out of case. Idleness breeds ill humours and diseases in the body, and no less in the soul; Exercise keeps us warm, & healthful, now duties are the exercises of the soul! Reading of the word is

not the exercise of the eye only, but of the understanding; Prayer is not an exercise of the tongue only, but of the heart? it sets all the faculties of the soul on work; it sets the several graces on work, it sets faith on work; it sets hope and holy desires on work; and grace kept in action, will be so much the more active and powerful in the whole course.

2. *In Duties we have an intimate Converse with God.* Therefore they are sometimes called, *Our drawing nigh to God*, Lev. 10. 3. *I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me.* Sometimes, *Our meeting with God*, Amos 4. 12. *Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel;* to meet him with *Present*, as Jacob met his angry Brother; to meet him with a *Prayer*, and supplication, Exod. 25. 32. *Thou wilt I meet thee*; when the Saints go up to meet the Lord, the Lord comes down to give them a meeting: Sometimes, *Our visiting of God*, Isa. 26. 16. *In their trouble they have visited thee.* When God visits his people with *Red*, they visit him with a *Prayer*; when we come to our *Duty* as we ought, we put our selves under God's eye, we set the Lord before our face. It's necessary to the right performance of Duties, that we have right and clear apprehensions of God, deep impressions of the Majesty of God, of his Omnipotence, Omnipresence, Holiness, Goodness, and Faithfulness, upon our hearts; this is required in that forementioned expression, *I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me.* Now what an influence will this have upon the upholding and carrying on the life of God in us, to have daily such a sight of God before our eyes, and such a sense of God upon our hearts?

3. *In Duties we obtain new supplies, and fresh influence from God.* The flourishing state of a Christian is set forth, Isa. 58. 11. by a *well-watered Garden*, and Jer. 31. 12. it's promised, *They shall come, and flow together to the goodness of the Lord for Wheat, and for Corn, and for*

wine, and for Oyle; And their soul shall be as a well-watered Garden: Where observe these three things:

1. That the watering of the soul is from the goodness of the Lord: all the dewes, and showers of grace are from above. Our springs do not rise in our gardens: *All my springs are in thee.*

2. All the influences of the grace and goodness of the Lord are gotten down by your applying your selves to him in duty; that's the meaning of that expression, *They shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord*, they shall assemble and come together to seek the Lord.

3. The people of God, in their Address to him in duty, though it be but for a supply of things temporal, do get something for their souls; *they shall come for Wheat, and for Wine, &c. And their [souls] shall be as a well-watered Garden.* We never come to pray for any temporal mercy, and pray as we should, but our souls are gainers thereby. A Christian cannot come near the Throne of grace for any thing, but his heart hath a share in the blessing; And there are three reasons for it.

1. A Christian never prayes for temporal mercies, but he hath some words or other to speak for his soul.

2. Prayer, whatever it be for, is the Soul's drawing nigh to God, and exercising it self on God: And the soul never goes to God, but it brings back something of God upon it, even then when it may be denied the temporal mercy it seeks: As when a Saint is praying for a sinner, and God will not hear him for that sinner, yet he loses not that prayer, but hath it returned into his own bosome: So when the soul is praying for the concerns of the outward man, though it be denied in its particular request, yet its prayer shall not be lost to the Self.

3. Temporal mercies obtained as a return of prayer are *soul-blessings*. But now, when the matter of our requests are particularly for our souls, when grace is that we

come for ; when love, and life, and zeal, and spiritual strength is that we come for ; when the watering of a dry and barren, and the refreshing of a weary heart, is that we seek for, shall our souls then be sent barren, and weary, and empty away ? Our hearts are as Cisterns, which however sometimes they may be full of water, yet if there be not a supply from the Well, the waters in the Cistern will waste, and mud, and at the length dry away : Duties are our labouring at the Pump, which will keep the Cisterns full, *I sa. 12. 3. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the Wells of Salvation.* Christian, thou complaineest thy heart is barren, and dead and dry, and fit for nothing : Why, is there not a Well by thee, where there is water enough to refresh, and fill thee ? Why dost thou no oftner let down thy pitcher, or labour at the Pump ? why art thou no oftner with thy God ? Thy heart wants watering, get thee oftner to the Well ; more praying, more fasting, more conversing with Christ, studying the Gospel, searching and sucking the Promises, would quickly get thee into a better plight. He that's much with God, is rich in Grace. Thou art not so much streightned, thou canst not be brought so poor, and lean, and out of case, but thou knowest where there is enough to fetch thee up again, thou knowest where there is a Well, that hath not only water enough, healing water, but Wine and Milk, and Honey enough ; but thou must go oftner for it, if thou wilt have the benefit of it ; go therefore, and let down thy Pitcher, and thou needst not fear its coming up empty. Only in exercising thy self in Duty, take heed thou mistake not the Pitcher for the Well, take heed thou fix not thine eye on Duty, as if this were thy Christ, thy fountain, out of which thou may'st be supplied. Duties are but the pipes, 'tis the Lord that is the Fountain from whence all the water comes.

4. Duties are our conflicting with corruption, or striving against

against sin. Whenever we are striving with God, we are thereby striving against sin. Duty and sin contend for the victory; whilst Duty holds up, sin goes down: when Duty flags, sin gets up. Holy prayer will make us weary of iniquity; or our iniquity will quickly make such praying a weariness unto us: it is not for the interest of the flesh, to suffer the heart to be much in prayer, or other Duties, and therefore we find for the whole generation of carnal men, a little of it must serve their turn.

There is no such way for Christians to be revenged of sin, and to see their desires on this Enemy, as to bring it before the Lord; They never fight against it with greater zeal, or with more success, then *upon their knees*. When the sinner kneels in earnest before his God, his lusts must quickly kneel to him; our confession of sin, and laying it open before the Lord; our complaining to the Lord of it, our crying to the Lord against it, pressing him upon his promise, upon his Covenant, to help against it; these are the mightiest batteries our souls can make to the beating down our strong holds: When the Lord hears the groanings of his Israel under their oppressing Egyptians, he will arise and relieve them. Christians tell one another how sad it is with them, what woful work they have with a proud heart, or a covetous heart, or an hard heart, or hypocritical heart; and you may tell one another such sad stories long enough, and find little help. Go tell thy God of thy sins, carry them before the Throne of grace, make thy complaints against them there, and there thou wilt find compassion and deliverance.

Now gather up these four particulars together, consider them well, and then you will see, you that intend holiness in earnest, what great reason you have to set close in with Duties, and to accept of those directions which shall now be tendered unto you. The first sort of Directions are such as concern the right performance

of the Duty of Prayer : the advice I shall give you touching this take in these four particulars.

1. *Bring your selves, and hold your selves to a frequent and constant performance of this duty.*

There must be *performance*, or there cannot be a *right performance* : Those that pray not, or but seldome, it is a shrewd sign that the *root of the matter* is not in them; they that can live without Prayer, are *dead while they are alive*; Prayer is the first fruits of Christianity : it was said of *Saul* as a token that he was a Convert, *Behold, he prayeth*. The living Child comes crying into the world; and as it is a token of life, so it is a means by which this new Life is nourished : Prayer is a Christians Key to unlock the Store-houses and Treasuries of souls; he that can pray, God hath given him a key to all his Treasuries : Prayer will not only unlock the Clouds, as *Elijah's* prayer did, and bring down rain to refresh the dry and parched earth, but it will unlock Heaven too: It will unlock the Ark, and the Mercy-Seat, and get down Spiritual Blessings on the Soul. Praying is a Christians knocking at the Gate of Heaven, that knocking to which the Promise is made, *Mat. 7. 7. Knock, and it shall be opened*. The word which the Lord speaks to us is Gods knocking at our doors, *Rev. 3. 20. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock*. Praying, is our knocking at the Lords door, at the Gate of Heaven, that this may be opened. By the way learn, that if you will not hear God knock, it is just, not to hear yours; If Gods voice may not be heard on Earth, your voice will not be heard in Heaven; fear not, you shall be heard if you will hear : Hear him that speaks to you from Heaven, and your cry shall enter into Heaven.

Our Souls will never thrive nor flourish, unless the Rain and the Showers of Heavenly Grace descend and fall upon them : and we cannot look that those Showers should come down, unless we look up.

Persons

Persons that pray not, may be written among the Heathens, *Jer. 10. 25. Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen, and the Families that call not on thy Name*: Among the prophane ones of the Earth, who are described by this Character, *Psal. 42. 4. They call not upon God, they are altogether become filthy and abominable; there is none that doth good, they call not upon God.*

Where Prayer is not, there is usually cursing and swearing, and every abomination; look upon the non-praying persons, look upon the non-praying Families among you, and see how little good there is to be found; see if they be not as so many dead and dry Trees, on which no Spiritual Fruit appears, as so many dark holes into which no spiritual Light doth ever shine, as so many filthy sinks, in which every vile thing lodges.

Beloved, I have often pressed this duty on you, both *personal, secret prayer*, that there be not one person found among you that prayes not; and *Family, joynt prayer*, that there be not one Familie found among you, among whom God is not thus worshipped: I have often pressed this upon you, and given you particular helps and directions about it, and have not been negligent to put you in remembrance of it, so that if there be prayerless persons or families found among you, the guilt of it must lie at your own doors.

But will you yet hearken to me in this thing? will you give your selves to prayer? No word that is spoken to you, for the good of your souls, will ever prosper with you, if this word prosper not; it is in vain for me to persuade you to live a godly life, if you will not be persuaded to live a praying life. Would you ever come to any thing, see then that this exhortation do not come to nothing; Be ye therefore serious, *Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer, 1 Pet 4. 7.* Be ye instant, be constant in Prayer, set up your resolutions, and set your time;
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set your time, and keep your time; do not put off this duty, by pretending you pray alwayes, every day, and every hour; as the pretence of an every dayes Sabbath comes just to no Sabbath, so it is usually in the case of prayer, some carnal wretches praying alwayes, is not praying at all: *Get thee into thy Closet*, saith Christ, get thee a place, set thee a time, wherein thou saist, *vacare Deo*, wherein thou maist make it thy business to seek the Lord. Brethren, I say again, if you will not suffer me to prevail with you in this thing, I may even spare my labour of speaking any other things to you, wherein I shall have no hope of success, if I speed not here: some among you, in some private conference I have had with you, have given me some good hopes of the work of grace begun on your hearts: I have found that there hath been still a neglect of daily Prayer; this hath struck such a damp on my heart, as hath brought down those hopes to be even almost as low as nothing; and by experience I have found, that such persons as upon advice and warning, would not afterwards be brought to the constant exercise of this duty, if they have retained any favour of Religion at all, have yet from year to year been at a stand, and not the least sign of any improvement hath been to be seen. If ever therefore you will hearken to me in any thing that I tender for your souls good, deny me not in this, set upon the daily exercise of secret prayer; and if thou be resolved on the performance, I shall then be encouraged in the next place to help you on in the right performance. Therefore,

2. *Come to pray with an actual and great expectation of obtaining help and grace from God.* Do not barely impose this duty upon you, as your task; but excite and encourage your selves to it, by looking for a return: think what it is that you would have, and look to receive it: The reason why we obtain no more in prayer, is, because we expect

expect no more ; God usually answers us according to our own hearts : Narrow hearts, and low expectations have usually as little as they look for or desire : large expectations are ordinarily answered with large returns : Expectation will put life into action ; you will then pray with most enlarged hearts, when you are most full of hopes ; the reward that is looked for in the evening, will much encourage and quicken the labour of the day ; fear not to expect too much from Heaven : Be not straitned in the God of bowels, and you shall not be straitned in the God of bowels : open thy mouth wide, and he will fill it : God will never upbraid his beggars for looking for too great an Alms ; he hath enough to supply them, and he hath a heart to bestow it : God will never say to you, *you are too bold, you ask too much ; too much Grace, too much Holiness ; why cannot less content you ?* God hath given you commission to ask what you will, not to the one half, but the whole of his Kingdome ; the Kingdome you shall have, if no less will serve your turn. Christians, be thankfull for every little you receive, but look for much : be thankful for every little, every little received from God is much : A drop from that Fountain is worth the world ; yet content not your selves with some drops, when, if you will, the Fountain may be yours. The King of Glory loves to give like a King, and will never say, *This is too much, either for a King to give, or a beggar to receive.* Since he hath given you leave, spare not to speak, enlarge your desires, and let your eye be as big as your bellie : God hath promised you, and therefore you may promise your selves : whatever you ask (that is good for you) you shall not ask in vain, Oh, if we had so much in our eye when we come before the Throne of Grace, we should be oftner there, and yet still return with our load : well Christians, remember this, when ever you come to beg, look to receive ; come not to prayer as to a dry breast

breast that is like to yeild no milk ; or to an empty Cistern that will hold no water.

3. *Learn the skill to plead with God in Prayer.* Though the breasts be full, yet they must be drawn hard ere the milk will come : Though the Lord be willing to give those that ask , yet he will have them first to prove they are in earnest. Store of Arguments he hath furnished us with to press him withall, but he will have us use them : We must strive with God if we will prevail ; and the best striving is with his own Weapons. The Counsel I give you in this, is, plead hard with God, but plead with him upon his own Arguments : There are amongst many others, these four grounds on which to bottom your plea : 1. On God himself. 2. On Christ. 3. On the Promise. 4. On experiences.

1. On God himself. And there are two special things from which you may plead here.

1. *His gracious Nature.* Fetch your Arguments by which you plead with God for mercy, thence, whence he originally fetched his Arguments to perswade himself to shew mercy ; from his own bowels , from his gracious nature, from his natural goodness and gracious inclination to mercy, *John. 3. 16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son,* Eph. 1. 5. to vers. 10. *Having predestinated us to the adoption of Children by Jesus Christ unto himself (according to the Good pleasure of his will) to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved ; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins (according to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath (abounded) towards us, in all wisdom and prudence, having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed of himself :* Here we have heaped up in a few words , the riches of mercy which God hath bestowed on his people. Christ his beloved, Redemption through Christ, and the forgiveness of our sins, the

the adoption of children, acceptance in his sight, the Revelation of the mystery of his Will, or the discovering or making known these glorious mercies to us. But whence is all this, who is it, or what was it, that persuaded the Lord to this abundant kindness? Why, all this arose from himself, *He purposed it in himself*. He consulted no other Argument but what he found in his own heart; it was from his love, the good pleasure of his Will, his Grace, the riches of his Grace, wherein he hath abounded towards us, Hos. 11. 8, 9. *How shall I give thee up Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee up Israel? I cannot do it, I will not do it. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not destroy Ephraim. But why wilt thou not be angry, Lord, why wilt thou not destroy Ephraim? Oh, sayes the Lord, mine heart is turned within me; my heart sayes, Spare him; my bowels say, destroy him not. I am God, and not Man. I love him, and my love is the love of a God: I have compassion on him, and my compassion is the pity of a God; I will bear with him, I am a God of Patience: Love is my nature: Pity, and mercy, and compassion are my nature: I cannot destroy Ephraim, but I must deny mine own nature. Love, and Pity, and mercy, and goodness, are essential to God: He can as soon cease to be God, as to be gracious; and this is the fountain of all our mercy; Hence Christ sprung, hence the Gospel came, and all the unsearchable riches of mercy, prepared for poor, lost, and undone Creatures. When you come to pray, fetch your Arguments hence; Plead with the Lord upon his own nature, his natural love, grace and goodness. Thus we find the Apostle Peter praying for the Christians to whom he wrote, 1 Pet. 5. 10. [The God of all Grace] make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. Plead with the Lord in your Prayers, as the Psalmist pleads with himself in his Affliction,*

Affliction, *Psal. 77. 7. &c.* Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender Mercies? Is (his) Mercy clean gone? Hath (God) forgotten to be gracious? That men should be mercifuls, that men should forget themselves, and their friends, in their low Estate, is no such wonder; But hath God, who is all grace, and all mercy, all Pity, hath God forgotten? Doth mercy cease to be merciful, and Grace cease to be gracious? do Compassions cease to be pitiful? Hath God not only forgotten his servant, but forgotten himself? Remember thy self, Lord, thine own heart, thine own soul, and according to it, remember me.

2. *His glorious Name.* The Lords Nature is to be gracious, and according to his Nature such is his Name, *Exod. 34. 6.* The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. This is an Argument which the Lord puts into the mouths of his people, telling them, *Ezek. 36. 21, 22.* I had pity for my Holy Name; this I do not for your sake, but for my holy Names sake. And upon this we find them frequently pleading with him, *Psal. 31. 3.* For thy Names sake lead us, and guide me, *Jer. 14. 21.* Do not abhor us, for thy Name sake; do not disgrace the Throne of thy Glory, remember, brake not thy Covenant with us. Go you, and do likewise.

2. *On Christ.* And there are four things from which you may plead with God upon this account.

1. *The Lords giving of Christ to you as your Lord, and your Saviour.* Upon which gift you may call him your OWN.

2. *The purchase of Christ;* who hath bought from the hands of the Father, all that you stand in need of: He hath bought your lives, *1 Cor. 6. 20.* You are bought with a price; He hath bought you a *Livelihood*, hath purcha-
sed

sed an inheritance and Possession for you, 1 Pet. 1.

3. *The Interest that Christ hath in the Father*; being the Son of God, the Son of his Love, the Servant of God, in whom his soul delights, Isa. 42. 1. *Behold my Servant, whom I have chosen, mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth* : whose Name is so precious, and powerful with the Father, that it will carry any suit, obtain any request, John 16. 23. *Whatever you ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you.*

4. *The interest that you have in Christ*. As he is precious to his Father, so you are precious to him: as the Father can deny him nothing, so he can deny his nothing, John 14. 3. *Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my Name, I will do it.* He gives you Commission to put his Name upon all your requests, and whatsoever prayer comes up with this Name upon it, he will procure it an answer. Now when you are praying for any mercy, especially for any soul mercy, make use of all these arguments; Lord, hast thou given Christ unto me, and wilt thou not with him give me all things I stand in need of? Hast thou given me the Fountain, and wilt thou deny me the stream? When I beg pardon of sin, when I beg power against sin, when I beg holiness, &c. Is not all this granted me, in thy gift of Christ to me? Is Christ mine, and is not his blood mine, to procure my pardon? his Spirit mine, to subdue mine iniquities? Are these mine, and wilt thou with-hold them from me? Oh, shall this guilt lie upon me, these sins live in me, these lusts rule over me, when by giving me in hand that whereof thou hast already given me a grant, all this would be removed from me? Look upon Christ, Lord; Thou hast said to me, *Look unto Jesus*, and give thy servant leave to say the same to thee, *Look thou upon Jesus*, and give out to me, what thou hast given to me, in giving of him to me. Look upon the purchase of Christ; Do I want
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any thing, or desire any thing, but what my Lord hath bought and paid for, and thou hast accepted of the price? Look upon the name of Christ, which thou mayest behold written upon every prayer I make; Though thou mayest say *for thine own sake*, thou shalt have nothing, not a drop, not a crumb; yet wilt thou say, *not for his Name sake neither*? Is not that name still a mighty Name, a precious Name before the Lord? &c. By these hints you may learn how to plead with God from any other arguments, drawn from his promises, your experience, &c.

Ques. But of what use is this our pleading with God? and in what stead doth it stand us, in order to our prevailing with him?

Ans. 1. It is not of use to change the purpose of God, to prevail with him to do that for us, which before he resolved not to do, but to bring forth his purposes into performance. We may say concerning the purposes of God, what himself sayes concerning the accomplishing of his Promise, *Ezek. 26. 37. Yet will I be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do this for them.* Such praying fetches out those mercies which were in the heart of God, and puts them into our hand.

2. By pleading with God by audience, we plead our selves into credence, or the more firm belief the Lord accepts, and will answer. And if by all these arguments, we can plead our selves into a stronger faith, our faith will certainly bring us down a fuller answer.

Quest. 2. These Arguments the Saints may use in Prayer: but is there no plea for poor natural men, that are yet in their sins, to make use of? What may they say for themselves, when they come before the Lord? have you never a word to put into their mouths? They have more need of arguments then any; What shall they say?

Ans. 1. I shall premise, That it's the duty of meeke natural

natural men to pray; For, 1. Prayer is a part of God's Natural Worship. If there were no positive Law requiring it, yet the Law of nature enjoins it, and no man is exempted from the Obligation of the Law of nature. 2. Otherwise it were none of their sin to neglect and refrain Prayer; where no Law is, there is no Transgression. Now we find in Scripture, that neglect of prayer is reckoned up amongst wicked mens sins, *Psal. 14. 3, 4. They are altogether become filthy, &c. they call not upon God.* Sin, though it doth disable, yet it doth not disoblige to Duty.

Object. That which is usually objected against this, is, *God beareth not sinners; The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord:* Now, no man is bound to offer up to God an abominable thing; better offer up nothing than an abomination.

Sol. In answer to this, consider, there are two sorts of sinners, *Resolved sinners*, and *Returning sinners*; and accordingly there are two sorts of Prayers made by sinners, 1. *Dissembling prayers*, mocking and lying prayers, *Hos. 11. 12. Ephraim compasseth me about with lies;* lying Sacrifices, lying devotions he makes as if he had a mind to know me, and serve me, when it is not in his heart; and such prayers are made use of, either as a *vail* to hide and cover their wickedness, and to make them appear to men to be righteous; or else as an *Engine or Device*, to quiet and pacifie their consciences in a course of sin. They make confessing of sin, to serve instead of forsaking of sin; praying to serve instead of repenting; their prayers help them to sin the more freely; they think they may go out with any thing, if when they have done iniquity, they do but pray for forgiveness; such prayers are an abomination to God, and a desolation to sinners, *Bring no more vain Oblations, Incense is an abomination to me. Sinners, not only your wickedness, but your very prayers will undo you.* If you make them a shelter
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for sin, your very prayers will be turned into sin.

Requering prayers. When a sinner, being struck with a sense of his sin, and of his necessity of changing of his way, and of his utter inability to turn of himself, under the fears and troubles of his heart, goes to God, and cries out, Lord, what shall I do? I see I am in an evil case, my soul is running on in sin, and thy curse and wrath I behold running on upon me; Lord, save me; Lord, help me; Lord, pardon, Lord convert me, break me off from my sins, break me off from my sinful corruptions, I cannot get loose, my heart is too hard, my lusts are too strong, my temptations are too many for me to overcome of my self, Lord help me turn me, and I shall be turned, pluck my foot out of the snare, that I be not utterly destroyed; for give mine iniquity, make me a clean heart, make me thy child, make me thy servant; that I may never again yeild up my self a servant to sin; Such a Prayer as this, if it be hearty and in earnest, if there be no promise of audience, yet at least there is an *half promise*, *Who can tell?* Or, it may be the Lord may hear. Though it cannot be properly said, the Lord doth accept, neither can any man say, he will reject it as an abominable thing; This being premised,

2. I answer to the question, That sinners, if they have but an heart to it, have also a price in their hands; God hath put arguments into their mouths also to plead with him for mercy. As,

1. *The Grace of God, or his gracious Nature*; his readiness to shew mercie, this even strangers may lay hold upon. *Benhadad's* encouragement to beg his life of the King of Israel, may be the sinners plea in begging of his. *We have heard that the Kings of Israel are mercifull Kings.* Go sinner to the Lord, and speak thus in his ears. Lord, I have heard, that *the King of Glory is a mercifull King*; Thy name is the Lord, merciful and gracious, and

thy Nature is according to thy Name; It is thy Nature to pity, and in thy heart there is plenteous compassion. Oh, I am a miserable creature, a poor, undone, helpless wretch; I do for me according to thy Nature; do for me according to thy Name? will the God of mercy send away such a wretch that comes for mercy? will the God of grace send me away without grace? the God of mercy hear me; the God of Grace grant me to find grace in his eyes.

2. *Gods Call, or gracious invitation, Isa. 55. Ho every one that thirsteth, come to the Waters; and he that hath no Money: come ye, buy and eat; buy Wine and Milk, without Money and without Price. Look unto me, and be ye saved altho the ends of the Earth. Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Rise sinner, he calleth thee, Go to the Lord, and when thou goest, tell him, Lord thou hast bid me come, and behold, here I am; I come Lord at thy word, I come for a little water, I come for thy Wine and thy milk, I have brought no price in my hand, but thou hast bid me come, and buy without Money and without price. Though I have no Grace, yet behold, at thy word I come for grace; though I have no Christ, yet I come for Christ; though I cannot call thee Father, yet being called, I come to thee as Fatherless; with thee the Fatherless shall find mercy. And is it only those that want the Fathers of their Flesh? Is it not also those that want the Father of Spirits? Shall earthly Orphans find pity; and only spiritual Orphans be lost Orphans? If I am not thy child, may I be made thy child? Hast thou not a childs blessing left yet to bestow upon me? Thou hast bid me come, come for a blessing, blest me, even me also: O Lord, Wherefore hast thou sent for me? Shall I be sent away as I came? I come at thy word, do not say again, be gone, be gone out of my sight, I cannot go at thy word; I will not go; for, *Whither shall I go from thee?**

thee? *Then hast the words of Eternal life.* Since thou wilt have me speak, Lord answer; Though I dare not say, *Be just to me a Saint,* yet I do say, I will say, I must say, *Lord be merciful to me a sinner.*

3. *Christ.* And there are two things in Christ, upon which sinners may plead with God.

1. *His sufficiency.* There is enough in Christ, in his obedience and death, to save the worst of sinners, to save the whole world of sinners. There is a fulness in Christ. Col. 1. 19. *It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell.* There is a fulness of *Merit* to obtain pardon, to make reconciliation for whoever comes; a fulness of the Spirit to sanctifie and cleanse them from their sins. *He is able to save unto the uttermost, all those that come unto God by him.* From this, Sinners may reason thus with the Lord: O Lord, I do not come to beg that of thee, that cannot be had; Thou hast enough by thee; look upon Jesus that sits at thy right hand, is there not righteousness enough in him, to answer for all my unrighteousness? Are there not riches enough in him to supply my poverty? Oh, shall I die for want of a pardon, when there is such Blood continually before thee, pleading for pardon! Oh, shall I lie down in my own vomit, and wallow in the mire of my filthy lusts, when there is such a Fountain by thee, that's still open for sin and for uncleanness! Oh, sprinkle me with this blood: O wash me in this Fountain. Hear Lord, send me not away without an Alms, when thou hast it by thee.

2. *His office,* which is to bring sinners to God, to make reconciliation for sinners, to make Intercession for Transgressors, Isa 53. Psal. 68. 18. *Thou hast received gifts for men, yea, even for the rebellious also.* What a strange and mighty plea is here for poor sinners! Oh, it is true Lord, I am a Transgressor, and have been from the Womb: I have played the Traytor, and been a Rebel against thee all my dayes: But is there none in heaven that

that will intercede for a Transgressor ? Hath the Lord Jesus received no gift for this poor Rebel, that falls down before thee ? Though I am a Rebel, Lord, yet I am a returning Rebel ; Though I am a Rebel, yet let me receive a Rebels gift ; not a Rebels reward, Lord, that would be dreadful, but some of those gifts which Christ received for the Rebellious. Doth Christ make intercession for Transgressors, and shall not he be heard ? If thou wilt not hear me who am a sinner, yet wilt thou not hear him that speaks for sinners, whose blood speaks, whose bowels speaks, whose spirit speaks ? Doth he speak for sinners, and yet not for me ?

4. *Their own Necessity* ; Sinners are necessitous Creatures, they have nothing of value left them, *In the fulness of their sufficiency they are in strait* : As a sinner of an hundred years, is but a child, so a sinner of thousands by the year, is but a beggar, poor, miserable, blind, and naked : He can want nothing, and yet doth want every thing that is good : Sin hath stript him to the skin, stab'd him to the heart, the iron hath entred into his Soul, it hath left him nothing but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores : Is this thy case, sinner, and hast thou nothing to say ? Spread thy wants and necessities before the Lord, and let these speak for thee : learn of beggars that come to thy door, who if they have ever a sore or malady about them, a blind eye, a lame leg, a burnt hand, a broken arm, that they will be sure to open, to move pity, and procure an Alms. Their pinching hunger, and their parching thirst, their naked backs, their cold lodging, thy door shall be sure to ring of : Never a penny in my purse, never a morsel of bread have I had this long time ; their necessity will both make them to speak, and help them to speak.

Sinner, spread thy necessities before the Lord, spread thy wants, open thy wounds & thy sores, tell him how despe-

desperately sad thy case is, tell him of the guilt that is upon thy head, the curse that is on thy back, the plague that is in thy heart. Goodst Bowels, look hither, behold what a poor, blind, dead, hardned, unclean, guilty creature, what a waked, scold, helpless creature I am: Look upon my sin and my misery, and let thine eye affect thine heart: *Oh deep calls to another, a deep of Mercy cries out to a deep of Mercy.* Oh my very sins, which cry so loud against me, speak also for me. My misery speaks, sorrow cries, the robe and the wrath that lies upon me. Thy throat speak, thy perishing soul speaks, and all cry in thine ears, *Help Lord God of pity, help, help and heal me, help and save me.* Come and me, for I am a *fisher of men*. O Lord, I bid thee not say as once it was said, *Depart from me, for I am unclean*. Come Lord, for I am a fisher of men. Thou couldst never come where it is more needed. Who have need of a Physician but the sick? Come Lord, I have now often said, *Depart from me*, but if thou wilt not say, *Depart from me*, I hope I shall never again say, *Depart from me*. My misery saith come, my wants say come, my guilt and my sins say come, and my soul saith come. Come and pardon, come and convert, come and teach, come and sanctify, come and save me. Even so come Lord Jesus. Thus you have the sinners plea. Poor sinner, Art thou willing to return from thy sins, fear not to go to thy God. Take thee some such words as these, and go and tell the Lord, that one of his poor Ambassadors told thee from him, that he expects thee before the Throne of Grace, and is ready, if it be not thine own fault, to grant thee mercy. Go, and the Lord help thee, give thee thy hearts desire, and fulfil all thy minds, and for thy encouragement take along with thee this Scripture *Isa. 55. 6. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the ungodly man his thought, and let*

him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and
our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

4. *Pray in Faith, James 1. 6. But let him ask in Faith.*
You will here enquire, What Faith is it that is necessary
to our prevailing in prayer? I answer; Not only
that Faith mentioned by the Apostle, Heb. 11. 6.
He that cometh to God, must believe that God is: Not
only a persuasion that he is able to performe our
petitions, or that he is ready to answer those that seek
him aright; not only a persuasion concerning pray-
er, that this is Gods Ordinance, appointed by him as
a means whereby he may obtain mercy from him:
Though all this be included in it, yet this is not all.
The same faith is necessary to the acceptance of our
prayers, which is required to the acceptance of our
persons. That faith which gives a person interest
in Christ, will alone procure the acceptance of his
prayers.

Now this faith puts forth in prayer a three-fold
Act.

1. It presents and offers up the prayer in the Name
of Christ, Heb. 11. 4. *By faith Abel offered his Sacri-
fice.* Faith carries our prayers to our Mediator, the
great *Master of Requests*, for his hand to be put to
them, without which they will not be regarded; yea,
it puts them into his hand; it says unto Christ, Lord
Jesus, take thou this prayer, what infirmities there are
in it, do thou cover; what sins thou findest in
them, do thou hide; *Mingle thy blood with my sa-
crifice*, let thine incense ascend with my offering;
and thus let it be carried before the throne of Grace,
where, that it may speak for me, let thy blood speak
for it.

2. It depends and relies upon God through Christ
for acceptance and performance. It eyes and leans
upon the Promise of God, which in Christ is *Yea and*

Amen; and setting to its seal, that God is true, upon this it stays it self.

3. It works the heart to a confidence, or a confident perswasion, that God for Christs sake will hear and answer, 1 John 5. 14. *This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he hears us.* But here consider, that this confident perswasion, that God doth hear and accept us; however it argues an higher degree of Faith, and brings in much peace and comfort to the heart; and if it be well grounded, is a good Argument that the Lord intends to fulfill our desires; yet it is not so necessary to the acceptance of our Prayers, but that they may be heard where this is wanting. If the former Acts have been put forth; if there hath been a presenting them in the hands of our Mediator, joyned with some little staying of our hearts upon the promises; though there be a great fear upon the spirit, that God doth not regard them, yet for all this they may not be rejected. I fear, saith a doubting Saint, I fear the Lord will not hear me, nor regard my prayers; there is so much sin in them, so many weaknesses, wandrings, distrusts, distractions, that I much doubt whether the Holy God will ever have respect to them; but such as they are, there I leave them, in the hands of my Advocate; I leave mine offering on the Altar, as poor as it is, it is the best I have; and though I much question whether it will be accepted, yet there I leave it, waiting what answer the Lord will give: I doubt not but such a prayer will be heard, and my ground is this, as it is in the justification or acceptance of our persons, so it is in the acceptance of our duties: That faith which will justify our persons, will doubtless justify our prayers: and that weakness or wavering, which will not hinder the one, will neither hinder the other. Now it is universally granted, that

our persons may be justified, even when we are strongly perswaded of the contrary; and I know no reason why the like must not be granted concerning our prayers. I note this the rather, for the support and comfort of many of the poor weakling servants of Christ, or such as are in a troubled or deserted estate; who, after they have sigh'd out their broken prayers, because their own misgiving hearts return them a *negative answer*, conclude that God doth so too: my Prayers are lost, the Lord doth not regard them? Why, how can you tell God doth not regard them? How can I tell, why, I cannot believe; the Lord will hear none but the Prayers of Faith, and I cannot believe; I cannot be perswaded that God doth hear. But by what hath been said you may perceive your mistake; you cannot be perswaded that God hears you, therefore you do not believe: Why, you may even then believe when you want this perswasion: Have you offered up your Prayers in the Name of Christ? Have you committed them to his hand, to present them to his Father, and leaving them with him, and adventuring them upon his interest, can you now but wait what answer the Lord will give? This is that Faith which will secure your prayers from being lost.

Having thus in brief shewed you what it is to pray in Faith, what remains, but that you practise accordingly, study the Attributes of God, his Power, Goodness, Mercy, and Truth: Study Christ, his Office, Interest, Sufficiency, and Faithfulness; study the Promises, and the stability of them; let your Faith set its Seal to all this, that God is good, merciful, mighty, and true: that Christ will be faithful in his Office, that his Name is mighty with the Father, that the Promises of God are in him, Yea and Amen. Strengthen your selves here, and so go before the Lord: let God be in your heart,
Christ

Christ be in your hand, the Promise in your eye, whenever there is a prayer in your mouth. Let your Prayer be so presented, your dependance be so settled, and your confidence, as much as may be, so raised, as before you have been directed, or whether you can attain to this confidence or no, yet do not fail of such dependance, and then see what a rich return your Prayers will sooner or later bring down upon you. But he that will pray without thus believing, let not that man think to receive any thing of the Lord; and if he doth get nothing, let him not lay the blame on Prayer, as if this were an empty useless thing, but on his unbelief. The answer which God gives to prayer is alwaies this, *Be it unto thee according to thy Faith.* And in this is included, *Be it unto thee according to thy unbelief.* This is the first means or help to a godly life, Prayer.

The second special Duty I shall direct you in, is holy Meditation. And touching this, my purpose is not to insist upon the general nature of it, but only to give you some directions for your putting it in practise.

The directions which I shall give, shall be such as concern, First, the matter of it. Secondly, The Method.

Concerning the former, I shall reduce the chief matters to be ordinarily meditated on, to seven Heads, which, as I shall afterwards advise, may serve an Head for a day, and so in every week you may go over the whole.

1. Head concerning God.

Begin with him who is the *Beginning of all things*, in whom we have our being; in whose Nature, as well as his Will, is the very foundation of all Religion. In the spiritual Nature of God is the reason of our spiritual Worship, his wisdom is the reason of our submission to him, his Power of our dependance on him, his Holiness

Holiness of our conformity to him, his Justice of our
 at, his Goodness of our love, his Truth of our trust,
 is Grace of our prayers, his Glory of our praises.

Now these are two things especially (that I may
 contract all into as narrow a room as possible) which
 you may pitch your thoughts, and exercise your medita-
 tions upon concerning God: Namely, his Dread-
 fulness, Goodness.

Direct. 1. In order to the bringing you to a due ap-
 prehension, and sense of the dreadfulness of God; set
 before your eyes, what the Scripture speaks of the Ma-
 jesty, Glory, Omnipotence, Omniscience, Holiness,
 severity, and Righteousness of God. The Scriptures
 speak of the Name of God, as a fearful Name. *Psalm*
111. 8. That thou mayst fear this glorious and fearful Name,
(the Lord thy God.) And this dreadfulness of God is set
 forth,

1. By the greatness of his power, *Jer. 5. 22. Fear ye*
not me, saith the Lord? Will ye not tremble at my presence?

Luke 12. 5.

2. By the immensity of his Nature, *Psal. 139. 7. Whi-*
ther shall I go from thy Spirit? Whither shall I flee from thy
presence?

3. By the glory of his Holiness, *Exod. 15. 11. Who is*
like unto thee, O Lord, who art Glorious in Holiness, fearful
in Praises, doing Wonders.

4. By his justice and Severity, *Heb. 10. 31. It is a*
fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, *Heb. 12*
29. For our God is a consuming Fire.

Direct. 2. That you may understand, and be duly
 affected with the goodness of God; consider what
 the Scripture speaks concerning his All-sufficiency, lo-
 ving kindness, Mercy, Faithfulness, Patience, &c. *Gen.*
15. 1. Fear not Abraham, I am thy Shield, and thy exceed-
ing great reward, *Psal. 36. 7 8, 9. Thy mercy, O Lord,*
is in the Heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the
clouds.

Clouds. How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God, therefore the children of men put their trust in thee. They shall be abundantly satisfied with thy fatness, for with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light we shall see light, Psal. 30. 5. For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life. Psal. 73. 26. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart; and my portion for ever, Psal. 91. 4. He shall cover thee with his feathers; and under his wings shalt thou trust; his Truth shall be thy Shield and Buckler. Psal. 84. 11. The Lord God is a Sun and a Shield. These Scriptures set forth the Lord, as a sufficient portion, wherein his people may be happy, and a sure refuge, wherein they may be safe. He is a Fountain of Light, Life, Joy, Rest, Peace, everlasting blessedness, and everlasting safety. He is the inheritance of the Saints, wherein they shall be satisfied; and their defence, wherein they shall be safe for ever.

Direct. 3. Ask thy heart these Questions,

Quest. 1. Is not this God worthy to be feared, loved, believed in, and chosen for my portion and trust?

Some choose riches for their portion, some pleasures, some put their trust in worldly friends; but will it not be well with me, if I can bring my heart to choose, and can obtain the Lord to be my friend, my refuge, and my portion?

Quest. 2. Is it not good for me to draw nigh unto God?

To get acquaintance and intimacie with God, to dwell in his presence, and to live in the light of his Countenance? is there any life so full of true pleasure, and satisfying delight, as to enjoy and behold the Face of God in Righteousness?

Quest. 3. Is the Lord mine?

Is he reconciled to me? is his love and mercy made sure to me? Some are confident the Lord is theirs, but they are mistaken; Am not I mistaken? is the Lord

mine?

mine indeed ? My God and my Portion, and my Friend indeed : If he be not, then,

Quest. 4. How may I obtain the Lord to be mine :

What pains should I refuse ? What course should I count too hard ? What price too great, to lay out for such an Inheritance ? Oh, how happily were I provided for, what a sufficiency had I laid up for me, for my body, for my soul, for this life, for everlasting, were the Lord once sure to me ? What shall I do to obtain him ; If he be mine, then,

Quest. 5. What shall I render to the Lord ?

Oh the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of the love and goodness of God to my soul, that he should bestow himself on such a worm ! 'Tis much that he should give me a being in his sight ; that he should give me bread, or cloaths ; that he should feed me with the crumbs that fall from his Table. 'Tis a wonder that he should not feed me with ashes, with Gall and Wormwood, with Fire and Brimstone, that he hath not clothed me with flames, with fury and vengeance ; 'Tis a wonder he should give any of his good creatures to comfort me, his Earth to be mine Inheritance, and my portion ; but that he should give himself to me, that ever a poor creature should be so provided for, as to feed upon his God, to live upon his God, to possess his God for a portion : Oh ! come unto me all ye that fear the Lord, come unto me, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul, *He that is mighty, hath done for me great things, and holy is his Name.* Oh, that I could love thee more ! Oh, that I could please thee, and praise thee, and honour thee, and rejoyce, and triumph, and make my boast of my God, and speak good of thy Name, while I have any being ! *The Lord is my portion, the lines are fallen to me in a pleasant place, and I have a goodly heritage.*

2. Head, concerning sin.

Direct. 1. Exercise your thoughts on the evil nature of sin, and consider what the Scriptures speak, concerning

1. The malignity that is in sin.

2. The guilt of sin.

1. Concerning the malignity which is in sin, calling it by the name of plague, leprosie, gangrene, poison, death, hell, excommunic, treachery, rebellion, filthiness, rottenness, vomit, &c. All which are Scripture expressions, which also tell us, that it hath made us in Gods account, fools, beasts, dogs, swine, serpents, vipers, devils, &c. What a monster is sin, that must have so many, and such names, to express the malignity that is in it?

2. Concerning the guilt of sin, Rom. 3. 19. *All the world is become guilty before God*, Mat. 5. 22. Guilt hath two things in it.

First, A merit of everlasting wrath. Every sinner is worthy to die, worthy to be damned.

Secondly, An Obligation, or binding over to wrath, Acts 8. 23. *For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity*. Sinners are bound under a curse, bound over to eternall vengeance.

Direct. 2. Consider your own particular sins, both the special prevailing sins of your *Hearts*, as ignorance, unbelief, stubbornness, obstinacie, pride, passion, covetousness, malice, &c. and the evils of your practice, lying, swearing, drunkenness, oppression: Reckon up as near as you can, and write down in a Roll or Catalogue, all the several wickednesses you have been guilty of, and can remember, together with your sins of Omission, neglects of Prayer, Hearing &c. your neglect of Christ, and the Gospel, &c.

Direct. Ask thy heart these Questions.

Quest. 1. *Am I not a sinner?*

Quest. 2. *Is all this which the Scripture speaks of sin,*

and sinners in general, true of me?

Am I by very nature, such a Serpent, such a a Viper, such a dog, such a beast in the sight of God? Is there all this enmity, and treachery and rebellion, rooted in my nature? Am I this guilty creature, worthy to die? Am I in this gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity? If this be my case, Oh, how can I lift up my face in the presence of God, without shame, and blushing, and self-loathing, and self-aborrence!

Quest. 3. Is my filth and guilt done away?

This was once my condition, is it not still? Is the enmity slain? is my corruption subdued? is my conscience purged, my soul washed? are my sins pardoned, is my guilt removed? If not, then

Quest. 4. What if this corruption should never be purged, this guilt never removed?

What if I should die in this case? If all this sin, and this guilt, should stand and stare me in the face, when I come to look death in the face? What if I should appear in this woful plight before the Judgement Seat? May I not fear it may be so? My sin hath been so long growing, and rooting in my heart: I have stood it out so long against the gospel, I have had so many warnings, so many convictions, and yet my iniquity remains unpurged, that I have reason to fear that it may never be purged. And, oh, what if it should not?

Quest. 5. What must I do to be saved from my sins?

I see I am in an evil and a woful case, but is there no Balm in Gilead? is there no Physician there, that can heal such a desperate disease? Is there no ransom to be found, that may redeem such a captive? Is there no blood shed, that may cleanse me, even me from all my unrighteousness? Is not Christ exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to this very purpose, that he might give Repentance and forgiveness of sins? Wherefore is the Gospel preached to me? Doth not Christ therein call to me,
and

and bid me come to him and be saved? Is such an opportunity to be slighted? is Redemption from such a state, worth the making after? May I obtain Redemption by Christ, whether I seek it or not? whether I repent or not? must I not believe, or be damned, repent or perish? is it a time for me to delay, or linger in a matter of such importance? Awaken, O my soul, put away thy sloth, lay aside thy excuses, and bethink thy self what thou wilt do. The Lord calleth thee this day, calls thee to return and repent, that thine iniquities may be blotted out; bethink thy self what answer thou wilt return. Wilt thou hearken, or not?

3. Head, Concerning Christ.

Direct. 1. First, Consider what the Scriptures Speak

1. Concerning the excellency of his Person, *John* 1. 14. *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth: Heb. 1. 3. who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his Person.*

2. Concerning the glory of the Mystery of Christ Crucified, *Isa. 53.* throughout; *He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were, our faces from him. He was despised, and we esteemed him not; Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God: But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, and have turned every one to his way, and God hath laid on him the iniquities of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth, Col. 1. 27. To whom God will make known what is the riches of the glory of this Mystery among the Gentiles, which is, Christ in you the hope of glory.*

Paul

Phil. 2. 6 7, 8. *Who being in the Form of God; thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.*

The Gospel is a Mystery full of Wonders.

1. There is a Wonder of Righteousness and Severity: That God should not spare, but punish sin, though upon his own Son.

2. A Wonder of Wisdom: That God should bring light out of darkness, life out of death! that God should bring about the Rising of the World by the fall of the Lord; the Riches of the World, by the Poverty of their Lord; the fulness of the Saints, by the emptiness of the King of Saints!

3. A Wonder of Mercy: That God should harden his heart against the Cry of his Son, and open his bowels to the cry of sinners!

4. A Wonder of Love: Love in the Father, in giving his Son; Love in the Son, in giving himself, his blood, his life, his soul, a Ransom for sin; and all this for Worms, Traytors, Enemies!

Direct. 2. Ask thy heart these Questions:

Quest. 1. *Oh what a Monster is Sin?*

What an Hell, what a bottomless pit is it, of malignity, and wickedness, that none but God can expiate or purge it away? that God cannot do it, but by taking flesh? that God manifested in the flesh could not purge away sin but by suffering? that no suffering would serve, but death? that no death could serve but such a cruel and cursed death? Oh, what a Monster is sin, that must have such blood, the blood of God to take it away!

Quest. 2. *What strange Love is the Love of Christ?*

1. Strange in regard of the fruit and benefit of it: All
P that

that Holiness and Beauty that my Spirit is clothed with, all that peace and joy that possesses my heart, all my glorious hopes and expectations for hereafter, all that difference that is betwixt my state and the state of Cain, Judas, and the whole reprobate World ; this is the love of Christ. Where had I now been, had it not been for the love of Christ ?

2. Strange love in regard of the fervency and ar-
dency of it ; and that not only to the whole generation
of the Elect, but to my Soul in particular. To express
this, ask this one question farther, What if Christ had
done and suffered all this for me alone ? What if there
had been but one sinner in the world, and I had been
that sinner, and Christ should have come down from
Heaven, clothed himself with flesh, giving himself to
death, given such a glorious Gospel, sent forth such a
multitude of Ambassadors to preach to, to convert
and save this one Soul, this my Soul, this had been
Strange Love. Such is the love of Christ to every E-
lect person, that if there had been but one sinner,
Christ would have done and suffered all this for one
sinner, rather than he should have perished.

Quest. 3. *Is Christ mine ?*

Have I a share in the Gospel ? Is my Name written
in the Lambs book ? *All are not Israel* ; though Christ
died for all, yet all are not made alive by him. There
are many from whom the Gospel is hid ; there are
many that have rejected the Gospel, that have put
from them the Word of Life. Whilst there are
such multitudes that are lost and perish for ever,
is my soul found, found in Christ ? Hath he that
hath died for me, drawn me to himself ? Hath he
that hath given me a liberty to lay hold on him, given
me a heart to lay hold on him : Hath he given me
his Spirit in my heart to sanctifie and cleanse me
from my sins ? If I have not, *the Spirit of Christ in me,*

none of his. Unless I wash thee, thou hast no part with
 If he be not mine, then,

Quest. 4. *What may I do to get Christ to be mine?*

May I have him without seeking him? Can I live
 by Christ, without coming to Christ, believing, repent-
 ing, and following of Christ? Is this ignorance, this
 blindness, is this earthly, this carnal course I take, is this
 loose and vain life I live, is this the way to get an inter-
 est in Christ? If Christ be mine, then,

Quest. 5. *How may I walk worthy of Christ?*

Is it not by being made conformable to him? Con-
 formed to his Image, by being holy, humble, and
 meek: Conformed to him in his obedience, cheerful-
 ly and readily doing the Will of God? Conformed to
 him in his sufferings, by being content to be brought
 down, and laid low, and made vile for his Name;
 Conformed to his Resurrection and Ascension, that
 his poor soul which hath descended with Christ, may
 also ascend with him? Ascend in holy desires and
 affections; ascend in holy praises and acknowledg-
 ments, confessing to him, *Worthy is the Lamb that was
 slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength,
 and honour, and glory, and blessing, for thou hast redeemed my
 life from death, and crowned me with loving kindness and ten-
 der mercies.*

4. Head concerning the vanity and misery of a world- ly life.

By a worldly Life, understand any course or way
 of life, which is short of a godly life. That which the
 apostle calls, *Ephes. 2. 2. The course of this world*; such
 a life, the main business, care, and delight whereof
 lies in the managing our worldly affairs and interests;
 buying, selling, working, trading, to get together
 for this worlds good; the main comfort whereof stands in
 the enjoying these earthly things; when as for our

souls, and the things of another World, little or no care is taken about them; and as little pleasure taken in them.

Direct. 1. Consider what the Scripture speaks concerning the vanity and misery of such a life, *Psal. 30. 6.* Surely man walketh in a vain shew, he is disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them. *Mat. 16. 26.* For what is man profited if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? *Jam. 5. 1, 2, 3.* Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries, that shall come upon you: Your riches are corrupted, and your garments moth eaten; your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat you as it were fire: ye have heaved up treasures together for the last days, *Luke 12. 6, 17, 18, 19, 20.* And he spake a parable unto them, concerning a rich man whose ground brought forth very plenteously; and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, this I will do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits: and I will say to my Soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said to him, Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee, then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.

Direct. 2. Ask thy heart,

Quest. 1. Is not my life a worldly life?

What have I done for hereafter? What have I laid up for the world to come? Have I been trading for Heaven? Have I been trading in Faith, Repentance, Prayer? Have I been sowing in righteousness and mercy, following of holiness and purity? What have I

bour and pains have I taken in seeking Knowledge, Grace, an interest in Christ, reconciliation with God, &c. that it might be well with my soul hereafter ? My body is cared for, I have enough laid up for that ; my Wife and Children are all cared for, I have made sufficient provision for them, but is not my poor soul uncared for ?

Quest. 2. *How long will this life and the comforts of it last ?*

My soul is immortal and must never dye. I must have a being somewhere or other to all Eternity. Is the happiness which I have chosen and pursued, an everlasting happiness ? Are my Money, and my Corn, and my Land, everlasting ?

Quest. 3. *What shall become of me when this life and the comforts of it fail ?*

Will this golden or silver key open the gate of Heaven to me ? Will my money buy me an inheritance in the land of Promise ? Will my thriftiness and good husbandry for this world, plead for me before my Judge, or excuse my neglect of my soul ? Will the memory of my plenty, or my pleasure, or my ease, in which I have lived here, be a comfort and refreshing to my soul hereafter ? Can all my carnal friends and companions, with whom I have lived so merrily, and spent so many a jolly hour, can their good word stand me instead then ? Will God own me, or Christ plead for me then ? Is not this he whom I have despised and refused to hearken to ? and will he not then say to me, *Go to the Gods whom thou hast chosen, go to thy money, and thy pleasures, and thy companions, let these save thee if they can.* O what shall I do, and where shall I dwell for ever, if I continue in this vain course ?

Quest. 4. *Shall I now set upon a better course ?*
 Shall I in earnest, wilt thou, oh my soul, wilt thou now

in earnest become an adventurer for another world? A Traveller to the holy City, which is above? wilt thou cast in thy lot with Christ and the everlasting Gospel? wilt thou at last fall to labour for the true riches, and enduring substance? wilt thou provide the bags that wax not old, a treasure in Heaven that faileth not: Shall I take this course, or shall I continue as I am?

Lead, concerning the excellency, blessedness, and necessity of a godly life.

Direct. 1. Consider what the Scriptures speak concerning the Entrance, Nature, Blessedness, Necessity of a Godly Life.

1. Concerning the *Entrance of a Godly Life*, or the way by which we come to be godly; that is exprest, by being *born of God*, John 3. by being *converted to God*. Act. 3. 19. *Repents therefore and be converted*, by having Christ *formed upon our hearts*, Gal. 4. 19. *My little Children, of whom I travel in birth again, until Christ be formed in you.*

A new birth must go before a new life, conversion before an holy conversation.

2. Concerning the *Nature of a Godly life*; which the Scripture sets forth in these and such like expressions: *Walking with God, walking in the fear of God, and the comforts of the Holy Ghost, living by faith, having our conversation in Heaven, and as it becometh the Gospel, being holy, harmless, the Sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked generation, shining forth as lights in the World, denying all ungodliness, and worldly lusts, living righteously, soberly, and godly, keeping our selves unspotted from the World, walking circumspectly, keeping a good conscience, &c.* By all which expressions, and many such like, it appears, that there is more required to a true godly life, then is ordinarily imagined.

3. Of the *Blessedness of a godly life*, Psal. 1. 1, 2. *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the way of sinners, but his delight is in the Law of the Lord.* Psal. 4. 4. *The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself; hath taken him out from the rest of the World, to be his own peculiar possession, his Favourite, his Servant, his Child, on whom he intends to bestow himself for an inheritance.*

Direct. 2. Ask thy heart,

Quest. 1. *Am I converted to God?*

Is there any supernatural change wrought upon me? Is this change a thorow change? Conversion is not a slight, but a great and marvellous change. Am I become a new creature? Is there a new light set up in me, a new life begotten in my heart? Am I become a man of quite another constitution, temper, disposition, then formerly I was? Am I born from above, and is my heart now set upon things above?

Quest. 2. *Is my life a Godly life?*

Do I think in my Conscience, that the course of life which I live, is that which the Scriptures mean by walking with God, living by faith, having the conversation in Heaven, keeping a good conscience, walking circumspectly, &c. Can this fleshly, idle, easie, trifling life which I live, be possibly accounted a truly godly Life?

Quest. 3. *Is a Godly life necessary?*

Can I be saved without it? Do not the Scriptures entail everlasting blessedness in the life to come, on Godliness of life here?

Quest. 4. *Can I be too Godly?*

Can I have too much likeness to God? too much care of my ways? too much fear of sin? Can I be too sure that God is mine? Can I have too much peace, too much joy, and inward comfort? I may be too rich to be happy, too great to be good, too merry to be wise; but I

cannot be too gracious, too humble, too watchful, too circumspect. Let me ask of dying persons, whether they have taken more care then needs? whether they have more grace then needs? Let me ask of those who when they come at last to be weighed in the ballance, are found wanting, whether there were any fear of making too sure, or being too busie, and diligent, and painful about the work of their souls?

Quest. 5. Shall I now, without any longer delay, set upon a godly life?

If it be necessary to take up this holy course, When shall I begin? Shall I this day resolve upon it? Can I begin too soon? Can I look after God too soon? I may dicker too long, till it be too late, and what if I should? What if I should stay so long in Sodom, till it be too late to escape to Zair? What if I should dwell in the Tabernacles of wickedness, till it be too late to return into the way of righteousness? Awake, O my soul, awake from thy worldiness, and sensuality; away from thy carelessness; Today, to day, if thou wilt hear his Voice, give thy self to God, give thy self up to the power of his Spirit and government of his Word. Hitherto I have been a fool, hitherto I have been a Servant of sin and the World; Oh that from henceforth I might yield my self to God, as one made alive from the dead.

4. Head Concerning Death and Judgement.

Direct. 1. Think on what the Scriptures speak concerning

The Dread of Death, and the Death of Death.

1. Concerning the Dread of Death, Rev. 6. 8. It's set forth by a pale horse, an horse for strength, there's no resistance of it; an horse for its swiftness, an horse for its office, and use, to carry away; a pale horse, for its galli-

ness: *Death* hath a grim and gastly countenance, that strikes terrour into all hearts, and paleness into all faces, *Job* 18. 14. Is called the King of Terrours, the Black Prince, the Prince of Clouds and darkness, as some render it: Darkness hath its terrour in it, and the King of terrours, that notes, the highest and most terrible of terrours.

The Terrour of Death arises,

1. From its Office or Errand, upon which it comes; which is,

1. To arrest the guilty sinners, and commit them to custody, to be reserved to Judgement.

2. To revenge the quarrel of an angry God. By sin death entered, Death came into the World, not only as the *Pedisequa peccati*, one of its Retinue, or Attendants, but as the *Vindex peccati*. By sin, man provoked God; by death, God takes vengeance on man.

3. To cut off, and carry us away to our place. Death is the door betwixt the two worlds the parting point, where sinners take their leave for ever, of their pomps, and their pleasures; of their houses and lands, and their friends, so as never to return to them again.

It's dreadful to be carried away from our habitations and acquaintance, we know not whither; sad was the death of him, who dying said, *Anxius vixi, dubius morior, & nunc quo vado, nescio*; I have lived in care, I die in doubt, but whither I am going I cannot tell; but to them that understand whither death is carrying them, (as 'tis the case of self condemned sinners,) into the place of darkness and eternal misery: This is it that makes Death indeed the King of terrours.

2. From its Armour: Death is furnished,

1. With a dart; this notes the stroke of Death; whereby it dissolves this Tabernacle, divides betwixt soul and body: This dart of death is such against which there

there is no Armour of Proof can secure us ; from which no quality or condition can exempt us ; neither King, nor Captive ; neither Rich nor Poor ; neither evil Men, nor good men, can escape this Dart : Whomsoever Death strikes, it strikes sure, and strikes home, and never fails of doing Execution.

2. With a sting, 1 Cor. 15. 56. *The sting of death is sin.* A sting doth two things ; 1. It pierces, 2. It poysons. Hence follow those tumours, and inflammations, and that anguish that a sting puts men to.

But what is the sting of death ? 'Tis sin ; This is the Poyson upon the Dart of Death, that makes it so full of torment ; an evil heart, an evil conscience, an evil life, this is it that makes death so terrible : A guilty Conscience often stings a sinner, in his life, in his health, in the midst of all his prosperity ; but when death and a guilty conscience strike in together, then it stings with a violence.

2. Concerning the *Death of Death*, or its destruction. This Enemy is to be destroyed, *Hos 13. 14.* Yea, it is in part destroyed already, 2 Tim. 1. 10. Christ, by dying and rising again, hath overcome Death ; and this not for himself, but for his members, on whose behalf he hath disarmed Death, and taken away its sting ; so that though it strike them, yet it cannot sting them : Death is an Hornet, hath stung our Lord, and in him, hath lost its sting : Hereupon the Apostle in the persons of all believers, triumphs over Death, 1 Cor. 15. 55. *O death, where is thy sting ? Thanks be to God who hath given us the Victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Christians, that through Christ have conquered sin, by the same Jesus have conquered Death ; so that now it is possible for thee to live above the fear of Death ; some natural fears there may be, some shrinkings back of the flesh, but the great fear is over, the bitterness of death is past.

2. Consider what the Scripture speaks concerning Judgement ; Consider these two Scriptures, 2 Cor. 5. 10. *For we must all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ.* Mat. 25. 34. to the end. *Then shall the King say unto them on the right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, before the foundation of the World, &c.*

Direct. 2. Ask thy heart these Questions.

Quest. 1. *Must I not die ?*

Quest. 2. *Whether will my death carry me ?*

In which of the two Regions of the other world, is my death like to land me ? Either in the Region of Everlasting Light, or in the Region of Everlasting Darkness ? To which of those two Regions am I now travelling ? By this I may guess, whither my death will transport me.

Quest. *What a strange change will Death make upon me ?*

What a change of my Judgement and Opinion ? with what a different eye should I look on all things then, from what I do now ? shall I look on God, on Christ, on Holiness, on peace of conscience, with such a light and undervaluing eye, or on the glory and pleasures, and lusts of the world, with such an admiring and doting eye, when Death comes, as now I do ? A godly life, a good Conscience, the Promises and Privileges, and hopes of the Gospel, I can look on as follies and fancies, and trifles : shall I count them so then ? sin, and guilt, I make a matter of nothing now, shall I have the same thoughts at Death ? If I could speak with any Soul, that's gotten one step beyond the Grave, and should ask him, What do you think of sin, and the pleasure of sin now ? What an answer might I then expect ?

What a strange change will death make upon my person ?

son? When, if I be a Saint, this poor Soul, that hath had its habitation in *Meshech*, hath been imprisoned in a sinful body, mourning, and sighing, and labouring under the burden of sins, and lusts, and temptations, and doubts, and fears, and scoffs, and scorns, shall in an instant be set at liberty from all this, and be lodged in the arms and bosom of the Lord of Glory. Or, if I be a sinner, then I shall be taken from all my glory and greatness, from all my delights and dalliances, from all my hopes and confidence, and be thrown down like *Lucifer*, Son of the Morning, from all my brightness, into the blackness of darkness for ever. When, though I lie down in hope and confidence, that I shall have rest, yet within a minute after Death hath closed mine eyes, I shall awaken in everlasting flames: How will my undone soul then cry out, Oh, where am I? Is this my place? Must this be my dwelling for ever? Are all my hopes and confidences come to this? Is all my mirth and my pleasure come to this? Wo, wo, wo to me miserable wretch; how am I deceived, whither am I fallen?

Quest. 4. *How dreadful will this day of death be to sinners, when it is come?*

Whilest it is only preached, or thought of at a distance, it affects but little; but when that day of darkness is come, and they shall feel their house of Clay falling; when their last Sand is running, their last breath drawing, their miserable souls lanching forth into the depth of Eternity; when a few minutes will lodge them in the place of darkness, and everlasting torments: What a black day will it appear then?

Quest. 5. *On which hand am I like to stand in the Judgment?*

Am I like to stand on the right hand, or on the left? Among the Sheep, or among the Goats? On which hand do I stand now? Have I my conversation among

mong the Goats, my fellowship with the Goats here, and can I expect to have my Sentence with the Sheep ?

Quest. 6. What may I do to get above the fear of death and judgement ?

How blessed is the state of those Christians, that are gotten beyond this fear ? They may well be content to bear the Cross, they may well be patient in tribulation; they need fear none of those things they shall suffer here, their great fear is over; Death is swallowed up in victory. But how may I, upon good grounds, be out of this fear ? How may I be fit to die, and to stand in the Judgement. and thence not be afraid ? Oh, if I could get the sting of Death out, this sin crucified, this guilt removed ; Oh, if I could get such a Life, over which Death can have no power ; if I could get Christ to be my Life, Judge, to be my Friend, then welcome Death, and the Grave ; welcome the great Day ; then that black hour will become the blessed hour ; then that dark and gloomy day, at the approach whereof, this sinful world will call to the Mountains to cover them, and the Rocks to fall on them, would be to me a glorious day wherein I shall lift up my head with joy, because my Redemption is so nigh. So let me live, that I may be fit to die, and then let my Lord come whenever he pleases ; Yea, then I may say, *Why are the wheels of his Chariots so long a coming ? Make haste, my Beloved, and be thou like to a Roe on the Mountains of Spices.*

7. Head concerning Eternity, or the world to come.

There is a two-fold *Eternity* ; Of *Blessedness*, and of *Misery* : The one, the portion of the Saints ; the other, the reward of the ungodly of the Earth.

Direct. 1. Consider what the Scriptures speak,

1. Conf.

1. Concerning the *Eternity of blessedness*; Heb. 4. 9. *There remaineth therefore a Rest to the people of God*; Psal. 16. ult. *At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore*; 2 Cor. 4. 17. *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternall weight of glory.* Whence note, that the state of the godly in another world, is, 1. A State of Rest. 2. A State of Joy. 3. A State of glory. 4. That the joy of this Rest is unspeakable and unconceivable; therefore called *Rest of God, the Joy of the Lord.* When a King makes a Feast, he makes a Royal Feast; when a King gives Gifts and Favours, he gives like a King. God will save like a God, reward like a God; such shall be the Reward of the Righteous, that men shall say, *Verily he is a God that judgeth*, Psal. 58. 11. 5. That this Joy is Eternal, 2 Cor. 4. 18. *The things which are not seen, are eternall.*

2. Concerning the *Eternity of Misery*; Isa. 30. 33. *For Tophet is ordained of old.* Tophet is a place lying in the Valley of Hinnon, near Jerusalem, where the Idolatrous Jewes burnt their Children in Sacrifice to Molock. And it is used as a Type to signifie Hell, or the place and punishment of the damned hereafter: Whereof this is the Description: *He hath made it deep and large, the Pile thereof is fire and much wood: the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it*, Matth. 8. 12. *But the Children of the Kingdom shall be cast into utter darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth*, Mark. 9. 44. *Where their worme dyeth not, and the fire is not quenched.*

Whence note, That the Torments of the Ungodly in another world shall be,

1. *Intollerable.* It is the wrath of the Lord that will lie upon them ; the *breath of the Lord* shall kindle and feed their flames. As the Lord will *ave like a God*, so he will *punish like a God* : The *Wisdome, Power, Severity, and Justice of God*, shall be exercised in compounding such a deadly Draught, such exquisite Torments, that the ungodly World shall feel, that he is a God with whom they have to do.

2. *Eternal.* That shall never have an end. This makes Hell to be Hell indeed ; a Pit without bottom, a Night that hath no Day following it, a Grave from which there is no Resurrection. Oh the height, and depth, and length, and breadth, of this one word, *Eternity*.

Direct. 2. Ask thy Heart."

Quest. 1. *Who shall ascend into the Holy Hill ?*

Shall the unclean enter in thither ? Or the ignorant, or Unbelievers, or Adulterers, or Drunkards ? Doth not the Scriptures tell me who they are, *Psal. 15.* throughout. *He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart ; he that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doth evil to his neighbour, in whose eyes a vile person is contemned. &c. Matth. 23. to the 12.* The poor in spirit, they that mourn, the meek, they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, the merciful, the poor in heart, the peace-makers ; These are they that shall ascend into the Holy Hill.

Quest. 2. *Who shall descend into the deep ?*

Rev. 20. 15. And whosoever was not found written in

in the book of Life, was cast into the lake of fire. Chap. 20. 15. For without are Dogs and Sorcerers, and Whoremongers, and Adulterers, and Idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lyer, 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9. In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his Power.

Quest. 3. *Am I in the way to this rest of God?*

Quest. 4. *Is my Title to this Rest sure?*

Is my name written in the Book of Life? Am I sealed with that Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of my inheritance? Have I gotten an assurance that Christ is mine, and Heaven is mine? Is not this assurance to be had? Is there not a promise left unto me of entering into the Rest? May not this promise by my believing, and accepting, and adventuring upon it, be made sure to me? What mean I to sit down so quietly, short of this assurance? Am I content to leave my earthly inheritance under such uncertainties, that I cannot tell what to call mine own? I cannot tell whether I have any thing or nothing? Do I refuse any labour, cost, counsel, that may secure my worldly interest? And what, is it only Heaven, and everlasting Glory, that is not worth the securing?

Quest. 5. *What if I should fall short of this rest?*

If at last I should see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets, sit down in the Kingdom of Heaven, and my self be thrust out? I have made profession

of Religion, I have had some good will to the wayes
 of God, born some affection to the people of God,
 had some communion and fellowship with them, had
 name and good opinion amongst them; I have
 come to the House of God with them, joyned in
 prayers, Fastings, Sacraments with them, I have attain-
 ed to some probable evidences of Grace. But what
 notwithstanding all this I should be found at last
 to be short of sincerity, and of true saving Grace? I
 have complained often of an earthly heart, of a sloth-
 ful heart, of a careless heart, of a lingering delaying
 heart, I have had some motions and stirrings in me
 to shake my self out of this sloth, to awaken and rouse
 my self up out of these delayings and triflings; I have
 been thinking often of taking more care and pains; I
 have been wishing often for a diligent heart; I have
 been hoping that it will not be thus always with me,
 but that one time or other I shall attain to more life
 and seriousness: But what if after all this complaining,
 and thinking, and wishing, and hoping it will be better,
 I should still run on thus from one day to another,
 from one year to another, till I be surprized, and
 should be taken away before I have gotten my heart to
 thorough closing with God in Christ?

Quest. 6. *How joyful will my state be when that day
 comes, if I may then be counted worthy to enter into this*

When the voice shall sound in mine ears, *Well done
 good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy
 lord.* When all these filthy garments and rags of the
 flesh shall be put off, when all these bitter tears shall be
 wiped away, when as the clouds of darkness, doubts,
 fears, sorrows, afflictions shall be blown over;
 when I shall be brought into the presence of the
 Father of Saints; and see all those glorious things
 that

that have been spoken of the City of God : when mine head shall wear that immortal Crown, and my heart shall taste, and drink of those everlasting pleasures at Gods right hand ; When I shall be brought into that general Assembly and Church of the first born, which are written in Heaven, to an innumerable company of Angels, to God the Judge of all men, to Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament, to the Spirits of just men made perfect ; when my heart shall acknowledge, Now I know indeed whom I have believed, and see for what I have laboured : when this poor soul, that in its travel towards Sion hath passed through a Wilderness, lien among the Pots, been fed with tears, cloathed with reproaches, clog'd with infirmities, discouraged with fears and dismayings, shall after all this be set down in the Kingdom of God, and be lodged in the arms and bosom of the Lord of Glory, and bear a part in those everlasting praises and Hallelujahs before the Throne of God for ever ; when mine eyes shall come to see all this, and my heart to possess it, will it not be a joyful day ?

Quest. 7. Can my heart endure to think of being shut out from this blessedness for ever ?

Can I burn ? Can I endure the vengeance of eternal fire ? Will boiling oyl, burning brimstone, scalding lead, a glowing oven, a scorching furnace, be an easie lodging for me ? Thou wilt not (oh my soul) be perswaded to repent, there is too much pain in that : Thou canst not bear a cross, or an affliction, a scoff, or a reproach ; talk to thee of Crucifying the flesh, of denying thy self, of parting with thy fleshly lusts, thy worldly companions, of entering in at the strait gate, of walking strictly and precisely according to the Gospel, thou cryest out, Oh these are hard sayings, who can bear them ? But how wilt thou

thou do to dwell with the devouring fire? How wilt thou dwell with everlasting burnings? Whatsoever it seems to thee now, think what Hell will be to thee when the day comes that thou must descend into it: now thou lookest to it as a scare-crow, or a bug-bear; thou canst drink away, or laugh away the fear of it; but what will it be to thee, when thou feelest thy self wrapt up in the flames of it, and not a drop of water left to cool thy tongue? Think on Hell, Oh my soul, and then think on Christ, and consider, if a Redeemer from such misery be not worth the accepting: think on Hell, and then think on Sin; then think on thy carnal pleasures and delights, and consider how they will relish with thee, when thus salted with everlasting fire: Are these the things for which I dye? Are these the price for which I sell my soul to Hell? Away, away from me all my lusts and pleasures, away from me my companions in sin; I confess I love you too well, but I must not burn for you, I must not damn my soul to please my flesh.

Touching the practice of this Duty, take these two further directions.

1. Every day, morning and evening, set apart some time for secret prayer: and when you go to pray, do not rush inconsiderately upon it, but first sit down and take one of these Heads, meditate on what the Scriptures speak upon them, and then propose the several questions to your hearts, and when you find your hearts, affected and warmed by these meditations, then fall to prayer.

2. Let each mornings Meditation be ordinarily matter for your thoughts to work on, and for discourse that day, unless providence cast in, and calls you to some other profitable subjects.

The matter of Meditation is purposely divided into seven Heads; to the end you may take one of

the Heads for each days Meditation, and so in every week you may go over the whole, being the chief things of Religion : And thus continuing from day to day, from week to week, you will be both more thoroughly acquainted, and more deeply affected with the things of God, and will find, through his blessing, more liveliness and enlargement in Prayer, and more comfortable success.

Onely take heed of formality, or resting in the work done, of going on in a round of Duty, without a due regard to the end of Duty : Let this be your aim in all, to get your hearts more fixed upon, and affected with the things of the world to come, more enlarged and quickned, and more effectually carried on in that course of holy and heavenly walking, the end whereof is everlasting life.

But now, lest any should complain that this course is too tedious, and that which they cannot have time daily for ; or that by reason of ignorance, or want of helps they cannot perform it ; I shall add this, that such persons who are weaker in their understandings, and thence unable to go through with this course, and all others, at such seasons as they are unavoidably straitned for time, may, instead of the larger, take this shorter course.

When ever thou settest upon the duty of Prayer, sit down, and ask thy heart these questions,

Quest. 1. *What am I ? am I a Believer or an unbeliever, converted or unconverted ? do I think in my Conscience I belong to God, or do I not fear I am the child of the Devil ?*

Quest. 2. *What do I do ? what are my ways, are they such as please the Lord, and tend to the salvation of my Soul, or are they the ways of death and damnation ?*

Quest. 3. *Before whose presence do I now stand ?*

Is it not before the Lord the Almighty God, who

is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and the avenger of those that slight or rebel against him?

Quest. 4. What am I come before the Lord about?

Is it not to plead with him for my soul, to beg my life at his hands, to beg my pardon, and redemption from everlasting death, and to obtain grace for the salvation of my soul?

This short and easie course would be some advantage, though to those that are able, and can redeem so much time, I would commend the constant use of the larger directions.

The third special Duty I shall direct you in, is, self-examination.

It is of great use to the carrying us on in an holy course, to know our state. For,

By the knowledge of our state we shall the better know our work; when we know what we are, we shall the better know what we have to do. If the question be, *What shall I do to be saved?* The answer of that will depend upon another question, *How far forth am I come already?* Am I converted or unconverted, in a state of sin, or in a state of grace? Let that question be first answered, and the answer of the other will be easie.

2. By the knowledge of this, that we are in a good state, we shall have much encouragement to hasten on. Assurance will quicken and encourage us on in the way of holiness. Those that affirm, that the *Doctrine of Assurance* is a licentious Doctrine, and serves for nothing but to maintain men in a loose, lazy, and idle life, understand not what they say, nor whereof they affirm; 'Tis all one as if they affirmed, That the more assurance any person hath of the love of God, the less he will love God; or that the more he loves God, the less care he will take to serve or please him. Those that know no other motive to duty but fear,

may preach such doctrine ; but those that have found the quickning and constraining power of love, must lay down both their reason and sense too, before they can believe it.

The way to know our selves, is to search and examine our selves, 1 Cor. 13. 4. *Examine your selves, prove your selves, know you not your own selves !*

Now to help you in this duty of Self-examination, I shall give you these two directions.

1. When you set to examine your selves by any marks or signs : In the first place examine your marks that you would try your selves by. If you would prove your selves, whether you have true grace or no by any mark that's given, examine that mark by the Scriptures, whether it be a certain and infallible sign of grace ; so that you may be bold to conclude, that if you can find this mark in you, you are undoubtedly in the state of grace. That's a proper mark of true grace, which whosoever hath it, hath grace ; and whosoever hath it not, hath not grace. If you take that for a mark of true grace, which is *common to Saints and Sinners*, you may take your selves to have grace when you have none. And if you take a mark to try your selves by, which is *proper to Saints, but is not common to all Saints*, you may take your selves to have no grace when you have. The former mistake may lose you your peace, this may lose you your souls ; therefore Christians be wary here ; try your marks, Before you try your selves by them.

2. For the matter of your enquiry, let it be

1. *Whether you are gotten into the way of life, or not ? or whether you are translated out of a state of sin and death, into a state of grace and salvation ?* And if so, then,

2. *Whether you be in a thriving or flourishing state, or in a languishing or decayed state ?*

To help you in the former tryal ; I might only send

send you back to those directions formerly given concerning your closure with Christ, whence it will not be difficult to gather some certain marks to try your selves by ; but I shall add two or three more, wherein let it not be offensive to any, that I follow that light which I have received from the worthy labours of that faithful Servant of Christ Mr. *Baxter* ; whence I confess my self to have through mercy, grown into the fuller acquaintance with mine own heart, and which I shall therefore the rather make use of, for the help and benefit of others.

1. Mark.

1. Wheresoever there is true Grace, there is an hearty willingness to part with every sin.

The first work of the sanctifying Spirit upon the soul, is the discovering of sin, making it appear to be an enemy ; and the first saving work, is the dividing betwixt sin and the soul, making an utter breach betwixt them. The Spirit of God, makes us first to look on sin as an enemy, and then to deal with it as an enemy ; to hate it, to fear it, to be impatient at the presence of it, *Rom. 7. 24. Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?* When the good Spirit enters into the heart, from that day forward, the soul looks on sin as *Saul* looked on *David*. when the evil spirit fell upon him ; its said he eyed *David* from that time forward, he looked on him with an evil eye, with an envious eye : Oh that I were once well rid of this *David* ; Oh (saith a Convert) that I were once well rid of this lust ! Its now become to the soul as the daughters of *Heth* were to *Rebecca*, *Gen. 26. 35. A grief of mind to it ; a weariness to it. I am weary of my life, because of these daughters of Heth.*

When there is this breach made betwixt sin and the soul, it is grace that hath made it ; when sin hath

lost the will, it hath lost the man : when Christ hath gotten the will, he hath gained the man. The will is the heart ; give me thy heart, is the same, as be willing to be mine ; the will is the strong hold of the soul ; this is it that holds out last against God ; when this is won, all is won ! Sin may have lost the understanding, and lost the Conscience ; these may plead for God, and for holiness, and cry out against sin, *Away with it, away with it ; Crucifie, Crucifie it ;* there is Death and Hell in the bowels of it, away with it. But as long as sin hath the will for it, it still hath the man. Reason saith, *I ought to turn ;* Conscience saith, *I must turn*, but yet nothing followes ; but when the heart sayes, *I will turn*, then the work is done : Reason saith, these Idols ought not to stand : Conscience saith, these lusts must be subdued, these my sinful pleasures, these my sinful ways, these my sinful companions must be left ; but when the will sayes to them, *Get you hence*, there's a work of grace begun.

But now this willingness to part with, or turn from sin, that it may infallibly prove grace to be in us, must be

1. Universal ; a willingness to be rid of all sinne. The enmity against sin, that's wrought by grace, is against the whole kind, against all sin, Root and Branch, Body and Members. A true *Israelite* would not have one *Canaanite* left in the Land, would have the whole generation rooted out, *Psal. 119. I hate every false way*, *Psal. 139. Search me, O Lord, and see if there be (any) wickedness in me.*

2. Habitual. It must not be only for the time that the heart is set against sin, when it is under some terror, or trouble, but there must be an abiding willingness. *Pharaoh*, when the Thunder, and the Hail, and the Fire, and the Frogs, and the Flies, were all

upon

upon him, for the time was willing to let *Israel* go, presently after he meant no such thing: 'tis not what thou art in a fit, or a fright, or sudden passion, in sickness, or under the apprehensions of death, that will give thee any certain light by which thou mayest judge of thy state, but what thou art in the standing and abiding disposition and bent of thy soul: A Godly man is never unwilling (when he is himself) to be rid of every sin.

3, **Prevalent.** The willingness must be greater then the unwillingness. A gracious heart is more willing to be rid of sin, then to continue in sin. He had much rather, if it were put to his choice, live without all sin, then to be allowed to live in any sin. Whatever the pleadings and reasonings of his flesh are, for an indulgence to any particular sin, whatever the advantages of yielding to the flesh herein might be, whatever damages or prejudices might follow upon parting with them, yet he had much rather, whatever comes of it, be freed from them all. If the Lord should come to such a soul, and give him as large a grant as he did to *Solomon*, *Ask what I shall give thee*, ask what I shall do for thee, write down what thou wilt, and thou shalt have it; this is that which he would have; *Lord, take away mine iniquities.* 'Tis not the lives of mine enemies, or a revenge upon them that I desire; 'tis not freedom from trouble or affliction that I desire; make me a clean heart, O Lord, purge me from my sins, let my lusts dye, my corruptions dye, and then though mine enemies live, and their malice live, and my trouble live, yet if my sins be once dead, I have my desire.

And this willingness will discover it self to be prevailing by bringing forth.

1. Resolution.
2. Resistance against sin.

1. Where

1. Where a man is truly willing to be rid of sin, there will be resolution against it ; he will not *only* be patient and content to *give God leave* to crucify all his beloved lusts, and darling corruptions, and give the Word leave to hew and strike home at the root of them, without hiding them, or warding off the blow, or wishing they might be spared to him, but stands stedfastly on Gods side, and taking part with him against sin, resolves to use all his means for the conquering and overcoming of them,

2. This resolution will bring forth resistance. An heart that's weary of sin, will fall to striving against sin, *Gal. 5. 17. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh ; for these two are contrary the one to the other.* Contraries are naturally expulsive each of other. Such a pair as a Jacob and an Esau, such twins as an Isaac and an Ishmael, cannot lie quietly together in the same womb, no, nor live quietly together in the same house, but there will be a mutual prosecuting and persecuting each of other ; fire and water may as well agree in the same Vessel, as grace and sin in the same heart. A gracious heart will be restraining, curbing, and withstanding it in all its workings. Its meanness and vanity for men to talk of being willing to be rid of sin, when they let it libe, and work, and rule, and run in its course, without ever laying the hand to the bridle to restrain it.

Let me add one word more ; if you strive against sin and your striving be attended with success ; if you have gotten any degree of victory, the evidence will be much more full and clear.

This now is the first mark, by which you may try your selves, whether there be the truth of Grace in you or not.

He that is willing to be freed from all sin, habitually willing, prevailingly willing ; he that's more wil-

ling to be freed from sin, then to be allowed to live in sin, and hereupon is resolved to use all Gods means for the conquering of it; and accordingly strives, prayes, watches, and wrestles against it, especially if he finds his lusts begin to fall before him, undoubtedly there is grace in that mans heart. *As Hamans Wife said to her Husband, If this Mordecai be of the seed of the Jewes, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him; I shall be bold to say to such a person, without any ifs or ands, This Mordecai is of the seed of the Jewes; this grace, before which thy lusts have begun to fall, is the Seed of God, and therefore thy sins shall never totally prevail against it, but shall finally fall and be destroyed by it.*

2. Mark.

2. Wheresoever there is true grace, there is a preferring in the esteem and choice, of a strict and sincere godly life, above any other life in the world.

A Godly man loves all Godliness, and he loves it above all, Psal. 19. 9, 10. *The fear of the Lord is clean, and endureth for ever; the Judgements of the Lord are true and righteous altogether; more to be desired are they then Gold, yea, then much fine Gold, sweeter also then the honey and the honey comb; that is, then all the world: more to be desired are they; that is, the fear of the Lord, and the Judgements of God, deserve more respect from men, are of more value, more worth the desiring and looking after, then Gold or Honey; Here are all the advantages of a worldly life put together in two words; the Profits of it, and the Pleasures of it; and the fear of the Lord prefer'd before them all. (Then Gold) Gold is all things; Gold, much Gold, hath greatness following it; Gold hath Glory, all the Glory of the World attending it: Lands, and livings, and honours, and friends, and all things that*

that a carnal heart can desire, are hid in the golden Mines. Honey notes all the sweetness, pleasures, and delights of a worldly life : Now, saith the *Psalmist*, put all this together, all the Revenues and Incomes of a worldly life, together with all its pleasures and delights, and the fear of the Lord will weigh them down all. Though this foolish World run a madding after Money, and Pleasure, spend their dayes, waste their lives, prostitute their Consciences, throw away their Souls upon these things, yet one dram of Godliness, one day spent in the fear of the Lord, is better then all this : this the *Psalmist* gives as his Judgment.

Let us next consider what his Choice is, *Psal.* 4. 6. *There be many that say, Who will shew us any good ? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us ; thou hast put gladness in mine heart more then in the time when their Corn and Wine encreased.* *Psal.* 17. 14, 15. *The men of the world have their portion in this life, their bellies thou fillest with thy hid Treasure ; they are full of Children, and leave the rest of their substance to their Babes : But as for me, I will behold thy face in Righteousness.* The men of this World, as they seek, so they have their portion in this life, they have a glorious and a gallant time of it here, great portions, great possessions, great prosperity, their bellies full of pleasure, enough to spend upon themselves, and to leave to their Children after them ; this they have, and much good may it do them : Let me but behold the face of God in righteousness, walk before the Lord in my Integrity, keep a good Conscience, live in the obedience of his Will, and in the light of his countenance, and then let them take the Corn, and Wine, and what else they can get : Let the Lord be mine, and I shall never envy them their portion : *Psal.* 84. 10. *I had rather be a door-keeper in the house*

of the Lord, then to dwell in the Tents of wickedness. The meanest condition of those that live in the presence and favour of God, I more desire, and would rather have, then the highest condition of others. Let me be a door-keeper among the Saints, rather than a dweller with the wicked. So *Moses*, Heb. 11. 25. *Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the Reproach of Christ, greater Riches then the Treasures of Egypt: P[sa]. 119. 30, 111. I have chosen the way of Truth, &c Thy Testimonies have I taken as mine heritage for ever. Where observe,*

1. How he came into the way of Truth; that is, not by chance, but by choice; I have chosen the way of Truth: There are some that stumble in upon Religion, who being cast into such places or Societies, where Godliness is in fashion and credit, joyn in to do as others do, and yet their hearts have never chosen Religion: but I have chosen the way of Truth, saith the Psalmist.

2. What it is he chose of Religion; *The way of truth, the Testimonies or Precepts of the Lord*: Some there are that have chosen the wages of Righteousness, but not the way of Righteousness; the *Promises*, but not the *Precepts* of the Lord; as much as you will of the *sweet*, but none of the *sweat* of Religion: But I (saith he) have chosen the way of Truth.

3. What account he hath of what he hath chosen: He accounts it as his Heritage. There be some that choose Religion, but it is only for a covering or a cloak to hide their wickedness, making the same use of it, which a Whore doth of her paint, to hide the deformity that is under. Others take up Religion for their last Refuge; something they must have, to which they may have recourse at last; but they will not have much to do with it, nor take much pleasure in

in it at present : But he chooses it, not only as his refuge, but as his Riches, not only to be the ground of his future hopes, but to be the matter of his present joy.

From all these Scriptures observe,

1. That a godly mans settled Judgement is, That a godly life is the best and happiest life.

2. That a Godly mans choice is according to his Judgement. He esteems the fear of the Lord above Gold, and he chooses it before Gold : He is better pleased, and doth rather take up with the meanest and most afflicted condition in a way of holiness, than with the most plentiful and prosperous estate in a way of sin ; he prefers the poverty of Christ, before the riches of the World.

3. Godly men and worldly men are distinguished, and may be known the one from the other, by their choice they make for themselves : He that makes a worldly choice, is a worldly man ; and he is a godly man, that makes a godly choice. Take Godliness with all its inconveniences, with all its difficulties and distresses, when it is most under a cloud of reproach and contempt, and take a worldly life with all its advantages, preterments, pleasures, in its greatest Sunshine of outward prosperity and glory : And he is not a godly man, he is not of the Psalmists spirit, that is not able to say, *Give me this poor, despised, godly life, before the most flourishing life of worldlings.*

3. Mark.

3. *Whosoever hath true Grace, doth actually live a godly life.*

The Tree is best known by its fruits, the sincerity of our purposes by our performances : If you think you have chosen a godly life, and yet do not live a godly life, it is a sign you are mistaken, and have not sincerely chosen it: 1 John 3. 7, 10. *He that doth righteousness is righteous ; he that doth not righteousness, is not of God.*

Thee

There is a two-fold Righteousness, and there is a two-fold *doing* Righteousness.

First, There is a two-fold Righteousness: Righteousness is taken

1. In a strict sense for *Justice*, properly so called, which stands in the due observation of that Rule, *Whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you even so to them.*

2. In a larger sense for *Holiness*, or an universal rectitude of all our actions. To live according to our Rule, the whole word of God, is to live Righteously: In this Scripture it is taken in this latter and larger sense. He who carries himself holily and unblameably, both in the things pertaining to God, and also in the things pertaining to men, he doth righteousness.

Secondly, There is a two-fold *doing* Righteousness.

1. In a Legal sense, which stands in *an exact obeying and fulfilling the Law*: And thus there is none Righteous, no not one; because thus, there is none that doth Righteousness.

2. In an Evangelical sense: *A walking uprightly, according to the Truth of the Gospel*: A sincere endeavour to observe all things which the Lord hath commanded us.

For the further clearing whereof, I must make use of a two-fold distinction.

1. I must distinguish betwixt a *single good action*, and a *series of good actions*. It is not one, or a few single good actions, but a continued course of holy actions, that denominates us holy. As there is no man so *holy*, who doth not sometimes fall into sin; so there are few men so wicked, who do not sometimes fall in with that which is good; and as every sin which a godly man, through infirmity, falls into, doth not presently denominate him *ungodly*; so neither will a few good actions done by another man prove him *Godly*;

'Tis

'Tis what the *course and tenour* of the life is, that must be diligently observed. A godly man makes Godliness the *business* of his life. Religion is a Christians Trade, and you may well call it his trade upon a double account.

1. It is his *Living and Livelihood*. Men live upon their Trades, a mans Trade is his maintenance; his Bread and his Cloaths, and his Lodging, all comes in from his Trade: Godliness is a Christians whole living; he prays, and he lives by praying; he believes, and he lives by faith; he loves, and he lives by love; all the supports, succours, comforts of this life come in this way. A Christians livelihood is all laid up in Christ, and in the exercises of Godliness; he gets it down into his Soul: Take away from a Christian his Religion, take away Faith, and Prayer, and Hope, and Love, and the labours and exercises of them, and you leave him a poor man indeed; take away his house and his means, and yet he lives: take away his bread, and yet he lives; but take Faith, and Hope, and Prayer, &c. from him, and he dies.

2. Godliness is the *business of his life*: A mans trade is his *constant work*; not the exercise of now and then a day, or an hour, upon occasion, but it is *every days work*. Godliness, as it is a Christians daily bread, so it is his daily work. Judge not thy self by what thou art in some few Holy-days of thy life, when perhaps by falling into affliction, or into some good society, or being present at some good Duty, or Ordinance, thou seemest for a fit to be another man then thou art. at other times. Judge not thy self to be what thou art, *when thou art not thy self*, when thou art but in a fit: but see what the trade and ordinary way of thy life is; he that in his ordinary course does righteousnes, he is righteous.

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2. I must distinguish betwixt a Christians actions, and his care about his actions : the Holy actions of some that are really Godly, especially of young beginners, may be but few, in comparison, but their care is more continued, what the Apostle saith of unmarried persons, is true of all Christians ; every soul that is married to the Lord, careth how to please his Husband : though I do not say, that all carelessness doth conclude we have no grace ; yet this I say, it is more then careless Christians can tell, whether they have grace or no ; though such may have grace, yet they can have no assurance. He that finds that the great care of his life is how to please the Lord, is of God.

Try your selves by this Mark also : do not enquire only about your affections, what your desires are, or what your joys are, what your comforts are, or what your peace is, but what your pathes are : when all comes to all this is the surest mark, *He that doth Righteousness is Righteous, he that doth not Righteousness is not of God.*

Put all these together, and whosoever there is of you that is thus willing to part with sin, doth thus esteem, and hath thus chosen a Godly life above all other lives ; and hath this attested by his actual care in his ordinary course to please God. Oh be thankful, and bless God for ever ! there is that work of Grace begun in thy soul, that doth undoubtedly prove thee to be of God, and in the State of Salvation.

Having faithfully tryed your selves by these certain and infallible marks, and proved your selves to be in the state of Grace, (for I would advise you to bring your tryal to a clear judgement) then proceed in the next place to examine.

2. *Whether you be in a thriving and flourishing estate or no ? whether you have made a comfortable progress in holiness ? or whether you be at a stand, or behind hand ?*

R

To

To help you in this, I shall only give you these two or three short directions.

1. *Compare your selves with your selves*, your present state with your former state : Look back and consider what you were, or have been at any time since you first believed, and then see what ground you have gotten or lost.

2. *Compare your state with your time that you have had, and your means, and opportunities, and the several talents that you have received.* See if your stature in grace be answerable to your standing : if you are of seven, or ten, or twenty years standing in the Vineyard of the Lord, consider if you also be of so many years growth : See if your Reckonings you have to bring in be answerable to your Receipts ; If you have been of long standing, and yet are but little of stature : if your knowledge be as little, your faith as weak, your love as cold, your peace, your comforts as uncertain, your corruptions as many and mighty as they have been many years since, much more if the waters of grace and peace run lower now then they did heretofore, you may conclude your selves to be but in a poor case, and indeed to be out of case.

3. *Compare your selves with the best of other Christians, to whom you have been equal in time, and other circumstances :* See if you have kept pace with the best of your time. If you see your selves behind your company, much more if you see divers that have set forth after you, to have out-run you, and gotten much before you : If you see Christians of less time, or less parts that have had fewer helps, greater hinderances, to have gotten the start of you : if those that have been but a few hours in the field are returning home laden with the sheaves they have gotten, and you that have been there all the day, have gotten only a few poor handfuls,

two fuls, you will have no Reason to think it over-well with you.

Christians, you whose case is this, is, *a barren and un-
briving case*, O labour to see it, and to lament it, and
pre-acknowledge it ; *I confess it is even thus with me*, I
con- confess this is my case ; if it be, bewail it ; mourn o-
since ver your neglects, and bemoan your poverty : If you
have had had a great Trade in the world, and a good stock,
e had, and good markets, and shouldst trade and trade from
valents time to time, and never prosper, but be poor and low,
ce be when you see others of the same Trade to flourish and
even, grow Rich, how near would it go to your heart ?
d of Christianity is a good Trade ; Grace is a good stock ;
years the Ordinances of God under which you have lived,
g in have been good markets : many that have set up long
a of since you did, are grown Rich, Rich in grace, Rich in
your comfort, Rich in good fruits, and yet that you should
re as still be so poor, and behind-hand, this is lamentable :
cor And oh lament over it, and consider, that it is time for
many you now at length to look better to your selves.

That you may get into a better case, examine a little
farther, what it is that hath hindred your thriving, and
con- kept you back ? Some of these following hinderances,
ed to which I shall name in a word to you ; some one or
risti- more of them, it is very likely have kept you thus
cum- back. Either,

1. A slight and overlie performance of holy *Duties* :
Duties have a great influence upon the state of our
om- hearts and lives. Look what Christians are in their se-
orth cret duties, you shall find them much after the same
n be- care in their ordinary course ; if you see a Professor
parts that's dead and barren, and careless, and unfavoury in
have his life, follow him into his Closet, and you shall (ten
ut a to one) find him as slight, and dead, and heedless in his
with prayers ; and those that shift over their duties, will but
been tuffle in their Conversation. Try if this be not your
and- case.
fuls,

case : Or, 2. Unprofitable *Converse with Christian Friends* : The Communion of Saints should be improved to the education of Saints. Christians should find other matters to talk of, then of their Corn and Cattel, the Weather, or News; What, have you not a God, nor a Christ, nor a Soul to be minding each other of ? Never a word of your Countrey, whither you are Traveling ? We should come together, to get light from each others Candle, to get warmth from each others fire : If you squander away such opportunities, no wonder if you remain dark and cold : Examine if you be not faulty here. Or,

3. Unnecessary *Converse with Carnal Friends* ; frothy and unfavoury company, leaves a chill, and a damp, and a vanity upon our spirits : Is it for nothing, that Christ requires his Disciples, *to forsake all the World*, Father and Mother, Son and Daughter, much more such carnal Friends as are at a greater distance ; if we cannot forget these, they will quickly help us to forget our God, and our selves.

Yet Religion doth not teach us to be unnatural, or uncivil, it requires that we give to all their dues, friendship, to whom friendship ; courtesie, to whom courtesie ; and duty, to whom duty belongs ; but this it teacheth, that we do not unnecessarily converse with those, whose society we may avoid, nor unwarily with those whom we may not avoid. With whomsoever your dwelling be, let your delight be in the Saints : if God cast you among others, let them be your fear, rather then your familiars ; and keep such a due distance, as may neither hinder you in your duties to them, nor prejudice you in your duty to God ; examine how it hath been with you upon this account : Or,

4. Overbusyng your selves about the affairs of this life : It may be, you find so much work to do abroad, that you let all lie at random within. It may be

be, the reason why your hearts are so cold, is, because you have so many Irons in the fire, you have so many Fields to look to, that your garden is all over-run with weeds: Or,

5. The remaining guilt of some unrepented sin *Israel* cannot prosper whilst there is an accursed thing in the Camp: Or else,

6. Some unmortified Lust that you live under the power of, and yet it may be take no notice of. You have it may be, a proud heart, or an angry fretful heart, or an envious revengeful heart, and this may be it that makes you pine away. An unmortified Lust in the heart, is like a Moth in the Garment, that eats out the strength, and mars the beauty of it. Pride in the heart, is as proud flesh in a wound, whatever Medicines be used, the wound remains uncured till the proud flesh be taken off. An angry fretful heart is like a Wolf in the breast; whatever be applied, it will prey upon and devour it, and the body pine away, till the fretting humour be cured; and so any other prevailing Lust will have the same effect. As a man in a Consumption, that's wasted to skin and bone, whatever Cordials, or Restoratives he takes, his flesh will never be gotten up, his strength will never return, till the corroding Rhume be stayed. If there be any prevailing Lust in thy soul, especially if thou indulgest to it, in vain shalt thou use many Medicines, for thou shalt not be cured, till that Lust be subdued. Thou mayest pray, and fast, and complain all thy life-long, of thy deadness and barrenness, and languishing state, and yet still be pining away, whilst there is any iniquity that thy heart gives indulgence to. Search diligently, and see if this be not thy case,

7. Slothfulness. The field of the sluggard is a barren field. He that will not plough, nor sow, nor weed, nor watch, nor work in his field, is like to have but a poor crop, *Prov. 24. 30.*

8. Contentedness with thy poor, and low, and barren state. Some that are born poor, live all their days, and take up with their poor state, and never look after Riches. For ought thou knowest, thy heart might have been in much better case, if thou hadst intended Riches: 'Tis the covetous Christian, that is the rich Christian: As 'tis with worldly men, the *Covetous of the earth*, these are the rich men of the earth, these are the monied men, the landed men, that have laid house to house, field to field: And it may be, if thou hadst been *spiritually covetous*, thou mightest have laid grace to grace, comfort to comfort, and have been a man of great possessions before this day: but thou hadst been a narrow-hearted, poor-spirited creature, that never hadst any ambition, nor tookest up any design to grow great and rich towards God, hereupon 'tis that thou art as thou art.

Christian, though there be none of the former causes mentioned, but may have an hand in bringing poverty upon thee, or holding thee under it: yet it may be this last, a *contentedness with a little grace*, is that to which thou owest most of thy pining disease. This is too common a case with Christians. We have not large hearts towards God, we are not covetous after holiness, we are too well contented to be Babes in Christ, to be children in the grace and knowledge of God; where shall we find a Christian almost, that is resolved to be Rich, to seek great things for himself, the great things of Eternity I mean, to bring forth much fruit? It is no wonder there are so many barren sheep in Christs Fold, so many barren Fig trees in Christs Vineyard, so many starvelling Souls among the Professors

professors of Religion ; when there are so few that do seriously design fruitfulness. We might have been as those Sheep which *Solomon* mentions, to resemble the Church by, *Cant. 6. 6.* Whereof every one beareth Twins ; we might have gotten double to what we have done, if we had had a mind in earnest to it.

Brethren, Consider how it is with you, and if you find this to be your case, that your souls are in an unthriving state, search narrowly if some of the forementioned particulars be not those that have not kept you back ; and when you have found out the cause of your disease, rest not till it be removed ; for be ye well assured, That *that which hath hindered, will hinder, till it be taken out of the way.*

THE fourth and last special Duty I shall direct you in, is the *Renewing of the Covenant* : wherein, before I give you the Directions, I shall premise,

1. That every sincere Christian is (as hath been before shewed) entered into Covenant with God.

2. That Christians are guilty of much *treachery* and false-dealing with God. They break Covenant daily. The Lord may take up that complaint against many of us, which he took up against *Israel*, *Psal. 70. 36, 37.* *Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and lyed unto him in their tongue ; their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in the Covenant.*

There is a double falshood in the Covenant, which we may be guilty of :

1. There is a falshood in our entering into Covenant ; when we do it not heartily, but feignedly, when our promises to God are nothing but words : when we mean not, nor intend any such thing as our mouth speaks ; this is lying unto God. *They lyed to him in their Tongues ;* Oh how many such Lyars are there to be found

found among those that are called Christians. We have all Covenanted to renounce the World, and the love of it; to renounce the Flesh, and the lusts of it; to renounce the Devil and his Works. We have all Covenanted, to take the Lord to be our God, to cleave to him, obey and serve him only, and all our dayes: All this we have done in our Baptism, and in our Profession that we have since made, to stand to our Baptismal Covenant. But have we not, many of us, lyed unto the Lord? Hath there ever been any such thing in our hearts? Those that are *false in this foundation of their Christianity*, are but *false Christians*; those that have lyed unto God in their Covenants, are but *lying Converts*.

2. There is a falshood in our *keeping Covenant*; when whatever Reality there hath been in our *intention*, yet we fail in *execution*; when we do not stand to our word, or are steadfast in our Covenant, and every part thereof. And thus every Christian is more or less guilty: Every sin we commit, is in a degree, a breaking Covenant, a departing and going back from the Lord, and a dealing treacherously with the Most High. Oh how much falshood of this kind, is there to be found in every one of us, when some of our hearts are so set upon the World, and take so much liberty in pursuing, and so much pleasure in the enjoying of these earthly things, that the Lord is the less regarded and looked after! Is this according to our Covenant? When there is such fleshliness, and sensuality, to be found among others, when we live such idle, easie, careless lives; when our appetites, our passions, our tongues are left so much at their liberty; when there is so much provision made for the flesh, and so little for the soul. Is this according to our Covenant? Is this all we meant, in promising to be Christians? Is this our living to God, our living to Christ? Oh, what falshood have we been guilty of!

3. That

3. That all our breaches of Covenant, do exceedingly weaken the bond and obligation of the Covenant. The obligation of the Covenant may be said to be weakened in a double sense :

1. Really, when the tye of it is relaxed and loosened, and we cease to be so strongly bound as before ; and thus no sin can weaken our Covenant-obligation ; it doth not become ever the less our duty, to cleave unto God, for that we have so often departed from him, or ever the less our sin to follow the World, for that we have followed it so long. Our sins in this sense, do rather add to the obligation ; by how much the less we have paid off our debt, by so much the more there is behind : Our former neglects do oblige us to the more care for the future.

2. Sensibly, When the Bond of the Covenant being so often broken, is not now accounted so *solemn* or so *sacred*, as before ; by how much the more it hath been broken, by so much the less *sensible* hold hath it upon us. It seemeth but a very light thing to persons that have so often and ordinarily broken their faith with God, to break it over and over again : It doth not much affect or trouble such hearts which have been accustomed to transgress, to revolt more and more. When sin can plead prescription, it grows bold : *If I were to begin again (saith the sinner) I would take more care, and look better to my ways ; but over shoes, over boots, now I have gone on so long, it will not be much worse if I go on a little longer.*

4. The *Renewing* of our Covenant, will revive the obligation of it. Though there be not a stricter, yet there is another tye ; there is a *new link* added to the *old cord*. Men are more afraid and ashamed to break their word as soon as it is gone forth out of their mouths, The seriousness wherewith such a sacred duty should be per-

performed, will leave some impressions upon the heart. The very considering over our Covenant breaches, which is necessary to our Renewing of it, will awaken our hearts to more care and watchfulness.

These things being premised, I shall give you this double direction for the performance of this duty. 1. For the time when, 2. For the manner how.

Touching the former, there are some special times when this duty is especially seasonable : As,

1. Upon your falls into any greater sins. *Great sins make great breaches*, and 'tis not safe to let them lie unmade up. Breaking of Covenant, makes a breach upon Conscience, and this will prove as the breaking down the banks of the Sea, which if they be not presently made up, there may be no stopping them.

2. In great straits and afflictions. We have then our hearts at the advantage, to bring them back, or to bind them the faster to the Lord, when we stand in any special need of comfort, or help from God, *Gen. 28. 20, 21.* When *Jacob* fled from his fathers house, for fear of his brother *Esau*, he vowed, *If God will be with me, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and rayment to put on, so that I come again to my fathers house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God.* Times of straits and difficulties are a special season for this duty : Though it be too ordinary that those vows which we make in the dayes of our distress, are quickly forgotten in the dayes of our prosperity : Sicknes promises are in our health, like *Samsons* Withs, broken, as a Towe when it toucheth the fire.

3. In case of any declining to a careless, Remiss, and senseless frame of heart or life.

4. At our approaches to the Table of the Lord. These are some of the special times for the performance of this duty. 2. For the manner how.

1. Remember your Covenant, read over and consider distinctly the terms of it, and weigh diligently the strictness and great solemnity of your engaging to God therein, that your hearts may be the more deeply affected herewith.

2. Remember your faults : Read over and consider distinctly the sins you have fallen into, since your engaging to the Lord, together with the several aggravations of them, and repent and be humbled under them, *Isa. 50. 4, 5.*

3. Especially, consider how your hearts have stood towards the Lord in the main, whether your falls have not been such as give you occasion to suspect that you were not upright in your first engaging. Consider, whether such a life as you have led since, such sins as you have been overcome by since, are consistent with sincerity.

4. Resolve upon more care, watchfulness and faithfulness for the future. Verbal promises, though there appear some affection at the time, if they be not joyed with a resolution to take more care, are like to come to nothing.

5. Have a special eye in your engaging to the Lord at your special sins, failings, and neglects, that you have found your selves more enclined to, and more ordinarily overtaken by. I will through the help of God, watch against every sin, but especially against covetousness, passion, or lying, &c. This is my sin, herein I am apt to be faulty, here my hardest work lies. I will watch to every Duty ; but especially to temperance or patience, or self-denial, herein I have been most wanting.

6. Lay hold on the Covenant or Promise of God, for the renewing of his Grace towards you. for the renewing of your strength, whereby you may be more enabled

to

to perform your promises, and pay your vows. It may be your former experiences of your unfaithful hearts, have quite discouraged you. I have found this heart of mine so fickle, and so false, and so feeble, that I dare not trust it so far, as to engage any farther for it. I have found my work so hard, my lusts so strong, my temptations so many, my strength so small, my attempts to follow God so successful, that I am afraid I shall never come to any thing ; I doubt I shall but mock God, and bring more guilt upon my self, by adventuring to promise any thing for this sinful, infirm, and unfaithful heart. Why, though thou dar'st not trust thy heart, yet trust thy God, who hath said, *That he will put his fear into thee, that thou shalt not depart from him, that he will renew thy strength, and that his grace is sufficient for thee.* Depend upon God for the Renewing of thy strength, and then fear not to renew thy Vowes.

7. In this strength of the Lord, go into his presence, and with sorrow in thine heart, and shame in thy face, falling down before him, humbly confess and acknowledge thy falls and failings ; and then in the like solemn manner, as thou hast been before directed, engage thy self again to the Lord in the same Covenant.

2. I shall next direct you to make a right improvement of Duties.

Godliness doth not stand barely in Praying, Meditating, or Examining ; there is something farther that these Duties have Respect, and must be useful to : 'Tis an *holy life*, that is the end to which our *holy duties* are to lead, and help us on. That they may do so, take these two following Directions.

1. *Whenever you set upon Duties, resolve to put hard for it, to enjoy such sensible Communion with God in them, that you may come off in a better and more spiritual frame of heart than you came on.*

2. *Having*

2. Having gotten up your hearts to any better frame in duty, be careful to keep it up after duty.

Whenever you set upon duties, resolve to put hard for it, to enjoy such sensible Communion with God, that you may return from them with some advantage upon your spirits. Resolve with him, *Nunquam a te absque te recedam*, whenever I come before the Lord, I will never go away without him.

The Reason why we thrive no more by Duties, is, because we do not meet our God in them; God never meets with his Saints, but he sends them away with some marks of his goodness upon them.

The Reason why we do seldom meet with God in our duties, is, because we do not so wisely look for his appearance. God waits for thy coming, Soul, and if it be not thy fault, thou may'st see his face before thou departest: and if thou see God in a duty, thou wilt not then return without some impressions of God upon thy heart.

When Moses came down from the Mount, where he had seen the Lord, *his face did shine*, there was something of the glory of God upon his countenance: Israel might plainly see that Moses had met with God, they might see the beams of Divine Glory in his face. Oh how sad is it, that Christians should return from duty with no more of God in their faces, or upon their spirits, then for the most part they do! We come many times with no other spirits from our Bibles, or our Closets, then we come out of our shops, or out of our Barns, no body would ever think we have been praying, or conversing with God, there is so little favour of God upon our hearts that we bring back with us.

Brethren, whenever you let down your Pitchers into the wells of Salvation, be not content to bring them up empty: Be so conversant with God in your duties, that you come off laden, as the Bee from the flower, with the

the honey and sweetness of your duties : And this I advise you to endeavour after, not only in your secret duties, nor only in your solemn publick duties, on Sabbaths, Humiliation-days, or Thanksgivings, but in your daily Family duties, your Reading, Singing, Praying, yea, even in those shorter prayers and praises, which you use before and after meals. Whenever you draw nigh to God, look to see God, tast of God, and to get down something of God upon your hearts. And then,

2. *Whatever you have gotten from God in duty, what life, what warmth, what refreshing, what enlargement of heart, be careful to maintain and keep it alive afterwards :* See that your spirits do not presently sink and cool again, after they have been thus raised and warmed. Do not satisfie your selves with this, that you have some comfortable entertainment with God, and feel some warm and lively workings of your heart toward God, and some refreshings from him in duty ; but look to it, that you keep that holy fire that is there kindled, from being presently quenched again ; you do not eat and drink for an hour only, that you may have the comfort of your food while your meal lasts, but you eat for afterwards, that the spirits and strength which you got by one meal, may hold you out to the next meal. Duties are the set meals of the Soul, wherein it so feeds it self upon God, that in the strength of what it receives, it may afterwards walk with God more comfortably and chearfully.

The Lord promiseth to his people, *Lev. 26. 5. The Threshing shall reach to the Vintage, and the Vintage to the Seed-time. And, Amos 9. 13. The Plough-man shall overtake the Reaper, and the Treader of grapes him that soweth Seed.* The meaning is, Your old store shall be so much, and last you so long as till new come again : You shall not only Reap enough for the time of Har-

vest,

vest, you shall not only gather enough to serve you during the time of the Vintage, but your Corn shall last from Harvest to Harvest, your Wine shall serve you from Vintage to Vintage; your old store shall not be spent, till new come to supply you. Duties are the Harvests and Vintages of our Souls: Oh what blessed lives should we live, did we so improve and husband what we got in one duty, that it might last us out to another! that the Vintage might reach to the Vintage, the Harvest to the Harvest; that the life and warmth, and refreshing we get in one Duty, might hold by us, till the next, and so we might be carried on in an holy, lively, heavenly frame, from duty to duty, as *Israel* walked on from strength to strength; till they came and appeared before God in *Sion*.

That which holds us so low and barren in Religion, is, that whatever we have obtained from the Lord in Duties and Ordinances, we presently lose it: when we have been weeping, sometimes before the Lord, and wrestling with him, and pleading hard for some quickning or comforting influences of his Spirit upon our hearts, and the Lord hath heard us, and given us our desires, yet then, as soon as duty is over, we go away, and forget all, and bury all that we have thus obtained, in a confused heap of worldly thoughts and businesses; we unbend, and let down our spirits, and lay aside all thoughts of God, till we come to duty again: we content our selves to live in such an estrangement from God all the rest of our time, that sin and the world have a whole dayes time to pull down what an hours duty hath been building, a whole weeks time to destroy and steal away what a Sabbath hath gotten in; and so at the returns of duty we find our hearts at the same loss, in the same deadness and hardness that they were before.

In the Old Testament, though the Sacrifices were offered

ferred but *Morning* and *Evening*, yet the fire that kindled them was not to go out *night nor day*; there must be fire kept alive from the Morning-sacrifice, to kindle the Evening-sacrifice, and fire left from the Evening to kindle the Morning Sacrifice. Oh behold, how often it is, that though at our Morning-sacrifice a fire is kindled, yet we let this fire lie all day under the ashes, and take so little care to keep blowing at it, that it goes quite out before the Evening; and when we come to offer our Evening-sacrifice, we have no fire to kindle it.

Brethren, hath the Lord visited you, and quickned, and comforted you in duty? Oh think with yourselves what a sweet life should I live, might it be thus with me always? what pity it is, that such light should ever go out? that such grace should be so short-lived? why, if I do not look to my self the better, this Sunshine will last but a little while: and how will the Lord take it, if I suffer such sparks that he hath kindled, so suddenly to be quenched? How is my soul ever like to prosper, if such precious food pass away from it as soon as it is received? *Is this a fast that I have chosen, for a man to afflict his Soul for a day*; Is this a prayer that God regards, for a man to afflict his heart for an hour? to be in the Mount with God, to be raised up to Heaven for the time, and within a few minutes after to be sunk into the dirt of the earth? What a sad change is this! how can you bear such a loss as this? when will your souls come to any thing, if you have only some few such *lucida intervalla*, and all the rest of your time are covered over with clouds and darkness?

Beloved, as ever you expect to prosper in grace, or be settled in peace, be chary of maintaining your *duty-incomes*; do not think to make use of your Prayer-comforts to save you the labour of an after-care, but to help you to be more careful and fruitful.

But how may we do to keep this holy and lively frame?

1. Be watchful, *Nehemiah 4. 9. Nevertheless we prayed, and set a watch against them night and day.* Beloved, it is with you as it was with those Jewes; whatever you have gained, you have adversaries lying in wait to steal it away; whatever you have built, you have adversaries lying in wait to pull it down again. I have heard of some enchanted places where what men built in the day, the Devil pull'd down at night, and this danger you are continually in; what's built at one prayer, the Devil labours to pull down before the next. Let your eye be much upon your hearts; observe diligently how they hold up or sink, that if there be the least damp or decay growing upon you, you may espie it *before it be gone too far*; 'Tis no wonder we lose all upon such a sudden, when ordinarily, as soon as ever our duties are done, away we go, and think no more where we have been, or what we have been about; as if we were well content to *take our leave of our duties and our God together*, When you depart out of your Closets, leave *your hearts behind you*; Worldlings seldom bring their hearts thither; when they come to pray, they *leave their hearts behind them*: Let Christians never carry them thence; when you have done praying, and must abroad to your earthly affairs, *let your hearts stay behind with your God*: Let your thoughts be much upon the entertainment you have had; see to it, that the temptations you meet with, do not so easily divert you from minding what you have been begging or wrestling for.

2. Make present use of what you have obtained: God gives Grace, and Strength, and Life for use, and use will preserve it. Hath the Lord warm'd thy heart, go warm thy Brothers heart, and that will keep

keep thine from cooling. Hath God spoken comfortably to thy soul? go and speak of thy God, and what he hath done for thee to others: Hath God inclined, and thereby fitted thee for action? take the season, thou mayest do more for God and for thy soul in such an hour, then in many dayes beside; be doing with what thou hast received, and thou needest not fear losing it: when we are idle, then we fall asleep, and grow cold; Instruments do not rust while they are in use. We never more spend our strength, then when we spare our labour.

3. Lift up your hearts to the Lord often every hour, in some short ejaculations. No business, no company can hinder this duty, and this will be of special advantage to you; therefore neglect it not; every sigh or breathing of your soul Heaven-wards will fetch down fresh influences from Heaven upon you.

4. Charge this whole course actually upon your selves every morning, and examine every evening how you have kept to it.

5. If you cannot otherwise bring or hold your selves to this course, bind your selves to it for some time by *special vow*; till being a while inured to it, it may become at length more easie.

Bring thus entred upon, and prepared for a Godly Life, I shall give you some directions how to carry it on; and for your help herein take these following Counsels.

I. *In your whole course pursue, and as much as possible eye your end, God and your own salvation.* Consider often wherefore you live, and what it is you would have; and if this be it, that God may be honoured and

and your souls saved, let this be pursued, and prosecuted in all the parts of your life. Take not that course, do not that action that hath not some tendency that way ; and that which hath a tendency, let it be directed to that glorious end. Let every arrow be levell'd at your mark. The reason why the end is no more attained, is, because it is no more intended ; 'tis no wonder we shoot short, or beside our mark, when our eye is not upon it.

The eying our end, will both direct our course, and quicken and encourage us on.

Set the Lord much before your eyes, dwell upon the contemplation of his Glory, and glorious Excellencies; consider how worthy the Lord is to be exalted ; and what an honour it is to poor creatures, to be any way serviceable to his Honour ; and what pity it is, that any of your time, any of your strength, should be spent upon vanity, which might be so improved to so worthy and high an end ; begrutch every minute of your time that is not bestowed on God.

Consider the blessedness of living for ever in the presence and enjoyment of God. Look towards the Holy City, enter by Faith into the Holy of Holies, set your selves before the throne of God ; view (as much as at this distance you are capable) that everlasting light, those blessed and glorious joyes, those rivers of pleasure, that exceeding eternal weight of glory, which is there possessed by the Saints ; And then say to your heart, Come on soul, come on ; here's that thou art praying for ; here's that thou art labouring for ; here's the Countrey, the Kingdom, the Crown that thou art fighting for, and wrestling for, and running and suffering for.

The setting this Glory before your eyes, will both
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quicken and sweeten your holy course, and take off your hearts from any other courses : The end puts a *beauty upon the means*, and a *blackness upon all the hindrances of its attainment*. A sight of Heaven will make a holy life a beautiful life.

There are two things that make a holy life beautiful.

1. That its the image of an heavenly life.

2. That its the way to it.

All the labours, difficulties, sufferings of a godly life, are therefore pleasant and beautiful, because they are the way of the Kingdome.

And on the other side, a sight of Heaven will make the wayes of sin to be unpleasant, to be dark and black ways.

There are two grounds upon which sin is odious to the Saints.

1. Its *opposition* and unlikeness to God ; it bears the image of Hell upon it, not of Heaven:

2. Its *Interposition* betwixt them and their end.

Nothing else can ever keep them from God ; there's no danger of their falling short of everlasting blessedness, but by sin. This is the only *Gulph that's fixt* between them and Glory. And hence 'tis that the way of sin, with all its pleasures, ease, and delights, is to the Saints, a *dark and dismal way*. The pleasures of sin are *black pleasures*, the gains of sin are *black gains*, the jollity and liberty, and prosperities of sin, are all *dark and black*, in their eye. These Clouds, whatever brightness there seems in them, do keep the Sun from shining on them.

Oh what progress might you make in the way of Life, were holiness with all its difficulties become beautiful, and sin with all its delights become odious ! What would there then be wanting, that might encourage

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encourage you on? What would there be then left to hinder you? Why, let God and Glory be more in your eye, and then sin will be more odious, holiness will be more precious in your eye; you would then neither want encouragements to lead you on, nor be incumbered with such temptations as now keep you back, *Tit. 2. 11, 12, 13. The grace of God (which bringeth salvation) teacheth us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live righteously, &c. Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 2 Cor. 4. 16, 18. For the which cause we faint not, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.* Before he had declared how hard 'twas with them, troubled, perplexed, persecuted, cast down, always bearing about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, &c. Notwithstanding, saith he, we faint not — while we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen.

Brethren, look on the things not seen, and take from them both direction in your way, and encouragement to go in it.

1. Take direction from Heaven. When you are Travelling, and see the place before you whither you are going, your eye will tell you your way. When you are entering upon any course, then look up and consider, Is this my way to God? When you are eagerly and greedily pursuing the World, ask your hearts, Is this my way to Heaven? Am I now working out my salvation? When you are walking in the way of carnal pleasure or liberty, then look up to the Lord, and look in upon your heart, and say if you can. *Now Lord, I am hasting to thee; now soul, I am taking care for thee; my sports, and my pleasures,*

and my lusts are the way to make God sure, and Heaven sure to me. Can you say so? Will not your own heart tell you, that it is not the way? If Heaven be it that I intend, if Salvation be it I mind, sure then I am not out of my way.

2, Look Heaven-ward, and take encouragement thence to go on: view the Glory that is above, and consider what happy men you would be, if you were once safely there; and let such thoughts press you to hasten on, and encourage you against all the labors and difficulties you must first pass through. Think with your selves, when you are setting upon any Duty, if I can get well through this Duty, I shall be one step nearer Heaven: When you come to the beginning of every day, well, I shall this evening be gotten one days Journey nearer home; when you are falling into any trouble or affliction, if I can cut my way well through this wave, I shall be so much nearer Harbour.

Every new degree added to your Grace, is another stone laid up upon the building of Glory; every holy Duty you have rightly performed, you are gotten one round higher in *Jacobs Ladder*; look how many dayes you have walked with God, so many dayes Journey you are nearer your rest: Look how many troubles and temptations you have gotten Christianly through, so many Gulfs have you shot, so many Rocks have you passed by towards your Harbour.

Oh, if such thoughts and considerations were continually upon your hearts, and before your eyes, how strangely would they quicken you, and encourage you on your way! Consider Christians, and thence take courage, after a few dayes more, a few duties more, a few waves more, you will be safely landed

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in your Countrey. *Lift up your eyes and see, and then lift up your heads and rejoyce to see, how by every duty and difficulty, your redemption draweth nigh.* A Travel-ler in his journey, that's almost spent and tyred, if he once comes within sight of home, and be almost there, this adds new strength and life, and on he goes again amain. Let your eye be more on your home, and there will be less loytering or weariness in your way.

II. *Walk on your way in the name of Christ.* Or, *live by faith,* Cal. 2. 20. *The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the Faith of Son of God.* The strength of a Christian is his Faith; the strength of Faith is Christ; the strength of Christ is put into the Promises. If you would live to God, live by Faith: if you would live by Faith, go often to the promises.

1. Study the Promises, the freeness of them; there's Grace in the Promise. The fulness of them; there's Christ in the Promise, and with him all things; there's wisdom, righteousness, strength; there's bread and cloaths, and lands, and friends, and safety; study the sureness of the Promises, there's an *Yea and Amen* set to them: *All the Promises of God are Yea and Amen.*

2. Set thy Seal to them; *Believe that God is true.*

3. Clear up thine interest in them, and thereby make it out that they are *sure to thee.*

4. Treasure up in thy memory, a stock and store of particular promises, which may answer every case of thy life, that so thou mayest have a word alwayes at hand to relie upon. And then,

5. Upon the credit of that word, venture on after thy Lord in any duty; through any sufferings he calls thee to; whatsoever difficulty thou seest in thy work, whatsoever danger thou seest in thy way, what-

soever want or weakness thou seest growing upon thee, go on, resting *upon Christ* for success in thy duties, and support under thy trouble, and supply of thy wants according to his word.

It may be when thou lookest before thee upon an holy life, thou wilt say, This is indeed a beautiful and blessed life, if I could attain to it : but oh, I see there is so much to be done, and so much to be born, that I am in great doubt how I shall ever be able to go through it.

The Lord requires me, if I will come after him, to *deny my self* ; This first step puts me to a stand ; I doubt I shall stumble, and fall at the very threshold of Christianity : Deny my self ! Alas, I cannot deny my friend, or companion, I cannot deny mine enemy that enticeth me to sin : If Satan do but speak a word to me, to draw me aside to iniquity, he presently prevails ; and must I yet deny my self, when I see how *unable* I am to deny mine enemies ? I cannot, I cannot do it. Why, here thy faith, if thou wilt consult with it, will furnish thee with this encouragement ; Though thou art able to do nothing of thy self, yet thou mayest be able to do all things *through Christ which strengtheneth thee*, Phil. 4. 13.

Again, thou sayest, the Lord requires me to make me a clean heart, to purge my conscience, to crucifie my Lusts : But who am I, that ever I should think of doing such great works ? I could as easily make a *new world*, as a *new heart* ; I can as well stop the Sun in its course, as stop my lusts in theirs. I can as easily dry up the fountains of the great Deep, as cleanse the Fountain of my corrupt heart, and purge my self from an evil conscience. I, but now thy Faith will tell thee, He that bids thee cleanse thy heart hath said to thee, *Ezek. 36. 25*, that he will *sprinkle*

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clean water upon thee, and thou shalt be clean from all thy filthiness. Thy Faith will carry thy fountain (of) sin, to that fountain that is opened for sin and for uncleanness, *Zec. 13. 1.* wherein thou mayest wash and be clean : thy faith will tell thee, *Thy old man is already crucified with Christ, Rom. 6. 6. By whom the body of sin is destroyed ; that is, hath received its death's wound, that thou mayest not serve sin ;* and that the same mouth that commands thee, *Let not sin reign in thy mortal body,* the same mouth hath promised thee, sin shall not have dominion over thee.

But yet thou addest, The Lord commands me to keep my heart, to keep my tongue, mine eyes, to make strait steps to my feet, that I turn aside to no iniquity, that I turn aside from all temptations to sin, abstain from all appearances of evil : and many more the like words hath he given me in charge, requiring me to walk in all his Commandments, and to keep all his statutes and Judgments, to do them ; these are hard sayings, who can bear them ? I, but he that said this (saith Faith) said one word more that will make all this easie, *Ezek. 36. 7. I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*

Once more thou repliest, But Christ commands me to take up my Cross, to suffer with him, to part with all I have, to lay down my life for his Name. Can I do so little for his Name, and am I ever like to be able to suffer for his Name ? Am I put so hard to it in every light affliction that befalls me, & is it possible I should be able to resist unto blood ? The Lord pardon me, I have found that a little shame or reproach is more then I can well bear : a scoff or scorn for Christ, to what impatience hath it often put me ? have I run with the footmen, & have these wearied me ? how then shall I contend with horses ?

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But God is faithful, 1 Cor. 10. 13. who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able. The Lord will lay on thee, (saith Faith) no more then thy load ; either he will encrease thy strength, or not encrease thy burthens : He that hath given thee a little strength to go through small tryals, hath said, he will, and thou mayest trust him, if he lay more load on thee, give thee more strength to bear it. The Lord will either enable thee to die for his Name, or he will not call thee to it.

Christians, believe God ; to him that believes, all things are possible ; and if you believe, they shall be fo to you : He hath said he will be, and therefore you may boldly say, *The Lord is my helper.* Trust in the Lord, and keep his way : trust in the Lord, and be doing good, and verily you shall be fed, verily you shall be assisted, verily you shall be supported and comforted, commit your way to him, and what ever difficulty there be in your work, he shall bring it to pass : commit the keeping of your selves to him, and you shall be kept by his power, through faith unto Salvation. Faithful is he that called you, and will do it. Distrust your selves as much as you will, but distrust not your Rock ; you are weak Creatures, but you have a strong God : you have empty hearts, but a full Saviour : you have but a poor stock in your selves, but a rich stock in the promise, whence you shall have such a continual supply, that your barrel of meal shall not waste, nor your Cruse of oyl spend, till you have finished your work and your course. Hang on your crucified Lord ; take hold on his Covenant, take hold on his strength, go forth in his Strength and Name, and then fear not ; your difficulties shall vanish, your way shall prosper, your Souls shall flourish ; you shall have your fruit unto holiness, and your end everlasting life.

III. *Deny your selves*, Mat. 16. 24. *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself.* Remember your Covenant, you have given your selves to the Lord, and are now no longer your own; you are not debtors to the flesh, to live after the flesh; you owe your flesh no ob-
 vance, you have already paid it more then its due; let him that liveth, live to the Lord; let them for whom Christ died, live no longer to themselves, but to him that died for them and rose again.

Christ and Self are contrary; you cannot serve these two Masters: If you will not deny your selves, you cannot but deny your Lord; and if you can deny your selves in any thing, you will deny Christ in nothing: If you can heartily say, *Not my will*, you will easily add, *but thine be done.*

But what is this self we must deny? I answer, As Christ said to the Woman of *Samaria*, *He whom thou hast for thy Husband, is not thy Husband*: That which thou holdest for thy self, is not thy self; thou callest it and countest it thy self, and lovest and che-
 ishest it as thy self, but it is not thy self. That which is here called thy self, is else-where in Scripture called thy flesh, thy corrupt or carnal part; that corrup-
 tion which is gotten into thy understanding, and sits there, giving thee evil counsel; That corruption which is gotten into thy will, and sits there, swaying thee in all things to chuse thy hurt, that is gotten into thy appetite, and makes thee to fall a lusting after all things that are pernicious to thee, and a resisting of all that would do thee good. This is thy self to be denied, the corruption of thy Nature, that hath infi-
 ltrated it self into all the parts and powers, and go-
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verns thee in all thy actions : This is it which carries thee from God, keeps thee from Christ, resists the Word of life, leads thee out of the way of life, leads thee about after thy pleasures and sports, and companions, holds thee down to this earth, and is dragging thee to Hell.

This is it which makes sinners say concerning the Word of Life, *The word that is spoken to us in the Name of the Lord, we will not do, but will do whatsoever proceeds out of our own mouths* : That makes them say concerning Christ, *We will not have this man to reign over us* : Let the World reign if it will, let the Devil reign if he will ; but whosoever reigns, this man shall not reign over me. 'Tis this that lays so many blocks, creates so many difficulties in the way of Holiness, makes this way seem too strait and narrow, the duties of it impossible, the troubles of it intollerable. Were it not for this, the Way of Christ would be easie, and his burthen light. This is that Self which must be denied, if you will follow Christ.

If you ask what it is to *deny self* ; In short, it is to shake off its government, to resist its reasonings, to disobey its commands, to refuse to follow its inclinations, or satisfy its lustings.

Brethren, whatsoever Christ counsels you to, or commands (as I told you) this Self will be reasoning against it, and countermanding it. When Christ says, Be humble, be watchful, be circumspect, be perfect labour, run, strive, suffer, your flesh will contradict, this is an hard Master; these are hard sayings; all this is bootless and intollerable : Shake off thy heavy yoke, and take thy liberty, turn out of this strait way, and take thy course : *pay thy self, spare thy self*, and put not thy self to such hard service, when thou mayest be free.

at least thou mayest abate something of this strictness. If thou wilt be holy ; what need so much care and labour about it ? Allow thy self some liberty, some ease, some pleasure : And if you yield in a little, then it will counsel you to take a little more, and a little more, and never give over till it hath reasoned you out of all Christianity, and commanded you into very Brutes or Devils.

But what shall we do, or how shall we deal with this Self, when it is thus set upon us ?

Why, return the same answer to it, as Christ did to Peter when he gave him the like counsel, *Master, pity thy self ; Get thee behind me Satan* (sayes he) hold thy peace Devil : speak no more thus to me : Say to this flesh, as the men of Sodom said to Lot, Gen. 19. *Stand back ; This Fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a Judge, or a Ruler.* Thou art stoln in, I know not how, stoln into my head, stoln in, I know not how, stoln into my heart, and now thou thinkest to be a Counsellor, to be a Ruler. Stand back (*Flesh*) hold thy peace, for I may not hearken to thee. Say to it, as the King of Israel said concerning the Prophet, *I hate him, for he never speaks good to me, but evil* : Say to this wicked flesh, as those wicked ones said against the Lord, *The word which thou hast spoken to me , I will not do* : The liberty thou demandest, thou shalt not have : the pleasure and the ease which thou cravest, I will not allow thee : My Lord whom thou counsellest me against, shall be my Lord, him will I love, him will I obey, him will I follow in all that he shall say to me : I will not pamper this *Flesh*, but pinch it the more : I will not humor this fleshly mind, but cross it the more : I will

will not feed this fleshly appetite, but hold it the shorter for its cravings and lustings : I will not pray the less, or fast the less, or hear the less, because the flesh is against it ; but will pray the more, and fast the more, and beat down this body, and bring it into the more subjection with the more care and diligence. I will starve this proud beggar, and weary it out of its imperious demands ; it shall get nothing, if I can help it, by all this adoe it makes, but shall rather be held the shorter : I will the rather deny my self what may allow my self, because I will not feed or foster such an enemy.

Oh Christians ! What an exact life might we live and with what ease might we go on our holy course if this enemy were once well laid ? What an untroubled dominion might our Lord have over us, if the Self were pulled down from sitting with him in the Throne ? and how much might be done to the destroying of it, by our constant denying it ? Keep the *Flesh* low, and by degrees you kill it.

But woe to us, what Friends are we to this Enemy ? How gently do we deal with this old man ? What provision do we make for this *Flesh* ? what we have a mind to, we must have ; what we have a mind to do we will do ; whither we have a mind to go, we will go, and seldome give our Reasons, or our Conscience liberty to say to us, *What dost thou ?* or once to judge, whether it be good for us, or fit for us, or safe to us, or no. We are just like some fond Parents, when their Child cry, though it be but for a knife, or handful of dirt, it must have it to still it. A wise Parent will rather give his Child a Rod, than that which will hurt it, and knows, that this will be hurt enough, that a Child should always have its will. O check and whip this brat, and let not thy soul spare for its crying.

Better

Better the Child cry then the Parent ; better the Flesh cry, then the Soul and Conscience.

But oh what a sad wonder it is to observe, how strangely indulgent too many Christians are this way, who suffer their flesh to lead them almost to any thing ; who in a self-seeking, flesh-pleasing life have equalled and even out-gone many of the carnal world ! What a liberty have many that *seem* to be Christians, even of the highest form, often taken in the dayes of their prosperity ! Some seeking great things for themselves, driving so hard after estates, honour, high places, &c. as if they meant to return and take their portion with the men of this world. Others living in pleasure, with Solomon, Eccles. 2. 10. *Whatever their eyes desire, they keep not from them, they withhold not themselves from any joy.* Who, as if they hoped to charm their flesh out of its enmity, or to kill it by kindness ; or as if this were the enemy, which when it *hunger*s they must feed, when it *thirsts* they must give it drink, and thereby heap devouring coals upon its head ; will not say it nay when ever it craves. Oh what liberty have we seen taken by many such, for excessive feasting, costly attire, vain fashions, frothy, light, and carnal merriments ; yea, and despisings, and condemnings of the stricter, and more self-denying way, or more severe and mortified Christians : as if this proceeded out of an affectation of a voluntary humility, or an ignorance of their Christian liberty !

But is this indeed the way to crucifie the flesh ? Or have you gotten it so much under command already, that now you can securely trust it with any thing it would have, without fear of its getting head, or making war against Christ or your Souls again ?

Look to your selves Christians ; look back, and consider, whether your Souls have not suffered, whilst your

your flesh hath been thus *surfeited*; whether there have not been some *abatements* made to Christ, for every such allowance granted to the flesh: and whether God hath not been *provoked*, whilst *Self* hath been thus pleased. Think sadly, whether this abuse of our liberty be not something that the Lord is now pleading with us about, and scourging us for. We have even put the Lord to it, to cast us *into the House of Mourning*, thereby to repair the breaches that have been made upon our Souls in our *Houses of Feasting*: and our Lord Jesus puts us the harder to our second Lesson, *Take up your Cross*, because we did no better learn our first, *Deny your selves*.

IV. *Order your selves aright*. Beloved, if you will observe the former Rules well, all that remains will be the more easie, and I shall be the shorter in it. *Order your selves aright*, in those things, I mean, that especially concerns your own persons; keep your own hearts with all diligence, look well to your own wayes *Gal. 6. 4. Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself, and not in another*. Keep a strict and severe eye upon your selves; hold a strict hand upon your selves; be more severe towards your selves, then towards *all the World*. Its an ill sign, to see Professors of Religion severe in their observing, imposing upon, and censuring others, and more remiss towards themselves. Be more candid and charitable towards others, but exercise more severity at home.

In the right ordering your selves, take great care that you

1. *Allow not your selves in the least known sin.*
2. *Live not in the neglect of any known duty.*
3. *Take heed of the World.*
4. *Be humble.*

5. *Be temperate.*

6. *Be Moderate.*

1. *That you allow not your selves in the practice of the least known sin.* Do not look upon this as any Apology for sin, or your easier entertaining of it, That it is but a little one.

There is no sin that can properly be termed little: The least iniquity will cost either the Blood of Christ, or the blood of your own souls.

Little sins are *spreading sins*; a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump: *Elijah's Cloud*, out of the bigness of a mans hand, in a few hours cloathed the whole Heavens in black: You will find it something in your Repentance, which you counted as nothing in the Commission.

Little sins are *leading sins*; the child conveyed in at the window, will open the door to let the great Thieves in. When *Gad* came into the world, his Mother said, *Behold, a troop cometh*, 2 Kings 6. 32. When the Messenger of the King of *Israel* came to the Prophet, Shut the door, hold him fast (sayes he) at the door: *Is not the sound of his masters feet behind him?* Shut the door against every sin; for whose Messenger is it? Look behind, and see who comes after; *Is not the sound of his masters feet behind him?* The Devil is not far off, when ever sin knocks for admission; and the door being opened to the Messenger, its like to stand open for the Master to enter: Take heed Brethren, that you do not give a tolleration to any sin; little sins if *allowed*, become great sins. The allowance of sin is that which makes the great waste upon Conscience, and the great spoyl upon our peace. I will not say what grace there may be in the heart, but sure there is but little tenderness in the conscience, that doth not bid defiance to the least of sins.

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Beloved, if sin doth get the possession at any time of your hearts, let it be rather upon *surprize* then *surrender*; be so watchful, that if it be possible you may not be surprized by sin, or taken unawares; but whatever you do, see you do not surrender your selves to it, be so jealous, that if it may be, Sin may not steal in upon you in a disguise, but when you see what it is, beware of it as of the Devil. Will you let a known Enemy lodge within you? Brethren, do not *shut* your eyes against sin, nor open your doors to it. Shut not your eyes against it, be willing to know it, do not go about to persuade your selves concerning any thing you have a mind to, that it is not sinful, that it may be lawfull enough for ought you know, but examine it, and look through it impartially, and if you find it to be sin, receive it not in. I cannot well say whether of the two be in the worse case; those that are not *willing to know what they do*, or those that *do what they know to be evil*; but this I can say, that neither the one nor the other (if there be any thing of God in them) are like to know whether there be or no; such *winkings* will blind their eyes, and such *walkings* will blot their Evidences; and both hinder that progress in Holiness which is necessary to build them up in comfort. If you would be sure the Lord is yours, keep close to him; if you would keep close by God, keep clear of sin; and if you would keep clear of sin, keep *your windows open, but your doors shut*; see who 'tis that knocks before you let him in. An open eye, and a tender conscience, will be the best security to both your grace and peace.

2. *Live not in the neglect of any known duty.* The Devil may be served not only by your doing evil but by your doing nothing; we obey the will of the

the flesh, when we only neglect to obey the will of God: As our Commissions stab, so our Omissions starve our souls: God will not, and our souls cannot wait a day; our *lamefess* in our practice, will quickly appear in the *leaveness* of our Souls.

Omissions will be reckoned for a Judgement, and therefore must be reckoned and repented of now. Do not content your selves with a *negative holiness*, that you do not harm; do not think it enough to be able to say, *I know nothing by my self*, no hurt that I have done; suppose you do not, yet *thereby are you not justified*. God will judge you, and may condemn you, for what you have (*not*) done. If you had nothing to answer for, but your neglects, The neglects of one day, of one hour will undoe you for ever, if you have not a Christ to answer for you. To be holy hath more in it, than to be harmless. There must be doing your duty, as well as departing from iniquity, *Isa. 1. 16. Cease to do evil, learn to do well.*

Nor is it a little now and then that will serve; there must be a continuance in well doing, a readiness to every good work, a fruitfulness in good works, a faithfulness in good works. *Well done good and faithful servant.* That's a faithful servant, that hath done his best, that hath not voluntarily neglected any thing of his Masters work, nor wasted any of his Masters Talents, that's able to say, though I have not done what I ought, yet I have endeavoured to do what I can; every neglect is a degree of unfaithfulness. If ye will be the servants of Christ, be faithful servants; and that ye may be so,

1. *Neglect not any kind of Duty.* One thing Lack-
ing, may be the loss of all. You can hear it may be,

but you cannot pray: you can pray in secret, but you cannot pray in your Families; you can instruct your Families, but you cannot govern them: you can love the Saints; you can be just in your dealings, but you cannot be charitable; you can give an alms to an hungry body, but you cannot give counsel to a sinful Soul; you can give counsel, but you cannot give reproof; this or that you cannot bring your heart to; but take heed, though you cannot bring your heart to it, yet neglect not to be working your heart to it, to be perswading and reasoning, and praying your heart to it, take heed there be not an *Act of Indulgence* passed for this neglect: take heed you do not say, *the Lord pardon me in this thing*, and so give off and let it alone.

2. *Neglect not any opportunity of Duty.* When ever the Lord call to duty, let your heart answer: When ever the Lord opens a door for any service, take the season.

1. Be watchful, and observe every opportunity. Sometimes the Lord puts *thine enemy into thine hand*, gives thee some special advantage against such a lust or corruption: Sometimes the Lord puts a *price into thine hand*, an opportunity of getting in, or laying up for thy soul, an opportunity of laying out for God or thy soul: observe diligently all such seasons. Thou mayest do more, or get more in such an hour, then in many dayes after.

2. Keep thy heart in a disposedness, and constancy towardliness to duty: be alwayes prepared to every good work; see that however sometimes thou mayest want power to perform, yet to will may be alwayes present. When a price is put into thine hand see thou want not a heart to it: When *thine Enemy*

in thine hand, let not thy heart spare it ; let not thine heart be out of the way, when ever the season serves ; let not thy heart recurre thus upon thee afterward, *O what day have I lost !* How much Seed might I have sown this day for Eternity ? What a treasure might I have laid up for everlasting ?

3. *Above all, take heed you (live) not under a neglect of Duty.* The most diligent and vigilant Christians have too many neglects, but see you are not guilty of any neglect in ordinary : that there be not any thing that you know to be your duty, which *you commonly, and of course,* pass over, so that this day is even as yesterday, and to-morrow, and next day, and next week, and so on, is like to be as this day. Whatever it be that you perform, such neglect as this will unavoidably hinder the thriving of your souls in the Grace of God. For,

1. The guilt of such a neglect, will wither and mar the beauty of what is done, and the Lord will have such a standing controversie with you for what is not done, that he will not accept or prosper what is done,

2. There will be the want of the influence of those duties that are neglected. We cannot want a Duty, but we may afterwards find the want of it in the state of our souls. Grace out of exercise grows to decay, and if *one of thy spiritual Members suffer or waste, the whole body suffers with it.*

3. The Devil will fill up the vacuities of our lives. There is not a void Plat in thy Garden, but the Devil will be sowing his seed : If you do, the Devil will not leave an empty day, nor an empty hour of your lives : If grace do not fill up each day with the duties of it, he will fill it up with sin : 'Tis an hundred to one, but we will grow up in the room, where a Flower is want-

Brethren, if you would be thriving Christians, be Universal Christians, for any work your Master hath to do ; be ingenuous Christians, willing to know your whole Duty, be watchful Christians, that you may know your Duty-seasons, and then be faithful allow not your selves in, be not patient with your selves under any neglect.

3. *Take heed of the World.* If you be Christians, [Christ] hath gotten the better of the world, hath gotten the preheminance in you, and brought the world under. If it be so, take heed it get not head again ; and that you may be both secured from the snares of the World, and make your best advantages as Christians of it, Take these following directions.

1. *Never make an exchange of Christ, or any thing of Christ for the world, or any thing that is of the world ;* never buy or purchase any thing of the World, at so dear a rate, as the loss of any thing of Christ. Lose not any degree of Grace, for the gaining this worlds goods ; lose not a spiritual duty, for the attending on a worldly business ; Enrich not your bodies, upon the impoverishment of your souls.

What possession or use of this World you may have without your spiritual prejudices, enjoy it, and be thankful, but beware you do not so take up with the businesses, and take in the advantages of this earth, that your souls suffer loss ; that you should ever have occasion to say of any thing you have done or gotten, *This is the price of my peace*, this is the price of my comfort, this is the price of a Sabbath or a Sacrament, or a Prayer ; I have lost a Sabbath. I have lost my communion with God in Prayer ; I have abated the life and vigour, and exercise of my grace ; and this is all I have for it, some addition to my outward state : I have more of Earth

but so much the less of *Heaven* ; more *Gold*, but the less *Grace* ; more of this *Mammon*, but so much the less *Manna* ; more of the *Cistern*, but so much the less of the *Fountain*. Beloved, it was never the intent of the Gospel to strip you of this worlds goods, but to secure you only from the mischief of it : be but so watchful, and so fearful, and so wise, and wary in the managing your worldly busineses, in the improving or securing your worldly estates, that you be not hereby losers upon a spiritual account, that you may have what you have as an *addition*, but not in *commutation* for Christ, and he will never begrutch it you, or blame you for it.

2. *Let not Christ and the world again change places, or Interests.* If Christ hath your hearts, let him not again be thrown under your feet : If the World be gotten under foot, let it not again get up into the Throne, let it be your servant if you will, but let it never again be your God. Let Christ be the chief in you, let him have the highest esteem, the dearest, the strength of your affections, the great command of you : Let the word of Christ be of more power with you, and carry you farther, then all the gains and glory of the world. Let not this be your rule, *To follow Christ and Holiness so far as you may, without any prejudice to your worldly Interest* ; but let this be it, *Follow the world so far only as you may, without being false or unfaithful to Christ.* Venture on in holiness to the greatest hazard of your estate, but venture not after this with the least hazzard of your Religion. Resolve to be Christians, whether you be rich or poor ; but endeavour not to be rich, but upon such terms as you may be never the less Christians. Especially take heed that the *Prosperity* of the world steal not away your hearts, *Psal. 62. 10. If riches increase it will not*

your hearts upon them. 'Tis hard to prosper in the world, and not to prostitute our hearts to it. Temptations of prosperity are the worlds courting, and complementing, and wooing of our love. If ever a Suiter be like to prevail, it is when he puts on his best array, and trims up himself in his richest and most enticing habit. Prosperity is the World in its glory; whenever it presents it self thus to you, *Then take heed lest you forget God, and prove adulterers and adulteresses from Christ.*

3. *Let not the Lord want any thing that you have.* There is nothing that you have but it may one time or other be said to you, *The Lord hath need of it;* and if he hath, let it go: If the Lord say, *I have need of it,* do not you say, *I cannot spare it:* Desire to have only for use, and what you have be willing to use it, and use it well. Nothing is well used but what is used for God. That which is bestowed on your selves, or your children, is misused, if it be not bestowed there for the Lord: Entitle God to all ye have, write his name upon it, and make it up for him. *That is his Wool, and his Flax, and his Corn, and his Silver, and his Gold, and use it for him.*

If your lusts, your pride, or your gluttony, or your envy; if your sports, or your pleasures, or your companions, demand any thing to be spent on them, or given to them, let your answer be, *It is not mine to give;* or what Nabals was to David, when he sent to him for provision for himself & his followers, 1 Sam. 25. 10. *What is David, or who is the son of Jess? Shall I take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give unto men whom I know not whence they be?* What are these lusts? what is this pride? what

are these pleasures? shall I take these good things which the Lord hath given me, and bestow them upon such vile things as these? Were these things given me to feed mine enemies, and the enemies of God? To feed Snakes and Adders, Vipers and Scorpions? Was this the end why God hath made me greater then others, that I might be more wicked then others? Hath God made me, that I might be a Drunkard, or an Adulterer, that I might maintain my pride, and my pomp, and my brutish pleasures? Hath God made me a rich man, that I might make my self a beast?

Beloved, the Lord hath rather lent you, then fully given you what you have; you are but *stewards of his manifold gifts* he hath put into your hands, you must give an account to God for all your receipts and disbursements, and your account will be but a lame account, if you bring in any thing laid out, that is not laid out for God: Let not the cause of God, or Religion, want any thing you have: Let not the poor Saints, or any of the poor afflicted ones of the Lord, go without their parts: Let it not be said of any of you, *As good they had been Beggars, as rich men, for any good they have done.* He that hath gotten such power over all he hath of this world, that he can freely dispose of it to its proper use, may be numbred among those that have overcome the World, and so is in the less danger of finding it a temptation, and a snare to him.

4. *Be you able to want what you have not.* To be able to want the world, is a greater honour and comfort, then to possess and enjoy it. I know not which is more difficult, to be able to use it well, or to be able to want it; but ordinarily he that can do

do one, can do both ; he that can carry himself as a Christian in his plenty, will be able also to carry himself so in his penury : The Apostle tells us, that he had learned how to do both, *Phil. 4. 12. I know how to be abased, and how to abound : In all things I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungry ; both to abound, and to suffer need.* Worldly men can do neither, they know not how to be rich, nor how to be poor ; how to be in credit, nor how to be in disgrace ; they can neither bear wealth nor want ; that is, they know not how to be as they should be, in either state. If they are rich and in credit, then they are proud, and wanton, and riotous, and luxurious ; if they are poor, and in disgrace, then they murmur, then they are impatient, and discontented, and envious at those whose wayes do prosper : if they are full, they forget God ; if they are empty, then they fret themselves against the Lord. To be able to want, and to abound, is the same as to be able to be a Christian, and to carry himself as becomes a Christian in both estates : to be able to hold on in a Christian course, without being hindered or turned aside by the one or the other : To be able to be holy with the world or without it : On the one side, to be able to be high, and yet humble ; honourable, and yet honest ; rich in this worlds goods, and yet rich in good works ; to bear his burthen of thick clay, without either sinking his spirit, or slackening his pace Heavenwards ; and on the other side, to be able to be poor and patient, afflicted and chearful, comfortable, contented, and as constantly serving the Lord in the want of all things, as others do in the fullness of all things : To be able to live by faith, though he hath never so much else to live upon, and

to be able to live by faith, when he hath nothing else.

Christians, if you can want, you shall never want: He hath enough that is able to spare that which he hath not. If you can want the World, the Devil will then want a temptation, either to entice you from, or discourage you in your Holy course; you may then be Christians in spite of all the World.

5. Above all, *Take heed you be indeed gotten clear of the world, from under its dominion.* Men may go farre in Religion, and yet may perish by the World at last: Its dreadful to consider, how many sad instances there are to be found among professors of Christianity, who have seemed to have much love to Christ, and think they love him sincerely, whose hearts are yet secretly chained to the world. There is many a professor, that hath made a fair shew, and given great hopes, and hath gotten up both in his own and others opinion, even to the highest rank of Saints, and is perswaded in his conscience, that he is upright with God, and yet his heart doth secretly cleave more strongly to the World then to Christ, and so may perish everlastingly. As there may be secret pride that men may be guilty of, and not know it; as there is secret *hypocrisie*, reigning *hypocrisie*, that men may be guilty of; so there is a secret *reigning covetousness*, that men may live and die, and be damned in, when they never suspected it; and this I fear is a more common case then is supposed: When we see men owning the Gospel, setting up the exercises of Religion in their Families and Closets, praying like Saints, speaking like

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Angels, melted into tears, raised in joyes, separated from the world, holding communion, and in many things holding pace with the best of Saints : When we see such persons (and are there not such to be seen ?) so excessively greedy, and so industriously driving on after the world, so constantly busie in laying house to house, and field to field; so possessed with worldly cares, so extreemly pinching and penurious, so hard-hearted, and strait-handed towards those that are in need, hiding themselves many times from their own flesh, whose worldliness is apparently too hard for their Religion, whose Religious duties must in ordinary give place to their worldly business, but their affection to Christ does make no abatement upon their earthly appetite and worldly cares, but is ordinarily abated by it ; who can say to *Duty, Stand aside, to Prayer, stand aside, to hearing or Meditation give place*, when ever they have worldly business before them ; but seldome or never can say, *Stand aside World, Stand aside Oxen, and Sheep, and Trades, and Livings, I have a God and a Soul to be looked after* : but can content themselves for that, with those few leisure times they have, wherein they have nothing else to do : and yet notwithstanding, because there is something of Religion kept going, and at times, some strong workings of their affections that way, thereupon do comfort their hearts, and conclude all is well ; nay, let them be never so plainly dealt withall, and warned to beware and look to themselves lest they be found *lovers of this World, and strangers from Christ*, yet they cannot see it, they cannot be perswaded, but their hearts are sincere : What can be thought of such persons but that they are like to dye for ever, by their secret

adultery

adultery against God, which they will hardly be persuaded to suspect themselves guilty of: Look to it that this be not your case, be sure you be gotten clear of the World, and that Christ hath the preheminence in you. The Devil will allow you to have some respect to Christ, some affection to Religion; will allow your Profession, allow your Duties, allow you good Company; let them pray, let them hear, let them associate with the Saints; so long as the World governs their hearts, they are sure enough. Some indeed he holds in *alta custodia*, close prisoners, that do wholly mind earthly things; though he could wish his Captives were all in such a case, without the least sense or shew of Religion, yet those that he cannot keep under so great a restraint, he is content to hold in *libera custodia*, as prisoners at large; any liberty, to pray, to hear, &c. that they may take, and yet be prisoners, he allows to them: if you be not close prisoners, if the Devil does suffer you now, and then to wa'k abroad, and exercise your selves in the Duties, and refresh your selves with the delights, and feed your selves with the hopes of Religion; if you be not close prisoners, yet are you not prisoners still? Oh let nothing content you, that you are prisoners at large: Oh let nothing content you, but your *enlargement out of prison*, so that you are no longer prisoners to the world, but Christs free men.

Be humble; keep your hearts low: Be low in your own eyes; think not of your selves above what is meet; be content to be low in the eyes of others: That is the harder lesson of the two; there is many a person that is so conscious of his own poverty and worthlessness, that if he would, he cannot have high thoughts

thoughts of himself, but yet he would, as *Saul*, be honoured before the people. Take heed of an inordinate affectation of esteem with others. Whilst you pretend only to seek a *good name*, take heed of affecting a *great Name*. Account your selves with *Paul*, and be content if others account you so too, *the least of Saints*.

Whilst others are ambitious, with *Simon*, to be accounted *Some-body*, be you willing to be accounted *No-body*; let who will affect to be reckoned amongst the *Worlds Great Ones*, let it be enough for you to be accounted amongst *Gods little Ones*. If the Lord hath lifted you up, take heed of lifting up your selves; your work is to abase your selves, and then let God alone to exalt you.

Pride is a *pernicious enemy*, and 'tis one of the last enemies a Christian hath to conquer; a pernicious enemy it is, it casts us out of the heart of God and men: God resists, and men despise the proud. A proud man, whilst he is his own Idol, is others scorn: it deprives of comfort, it spoils duty, it keeps us barren: A proud man is like the high Mountains, there's little good that grows there; the lower ground is ever the more fruitful; He is like *Ephraim*, an empty vine, empty to Godwards, all his fruit is brought to himself.

An humble Christian hath this advantage in his Duties, he hath none to please but God: let God accept me, and let others think of me what they will: A proud person hath his lust to please, the eyes and ears of others to gratifie: God and his Soul can have but little of him, that hath so many to mind: Pride blasts all that little good its mingled with: 'tis as the Flie in the Pot, that marris all the Oyntment: Christian, if thou hadst nothing else to keep thee humble,

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thy pride might do it, and would, if thou duly laidst it to heart.

Pride is one of the last Enemies, and longest-liv'd that a Christian hath to deal withal, it will rise up out of the Ashes and ruines of other lusts: 'tis not seldome that men are proud, that they are not covetous, or prodigal, or intemperate: nay, it sometimes rises up out of its own Ashes: Men may be proud of their humility, proud that they are not so proud as they have been: And can you be too watchful against such an Enemy?

Be humble Christians, be humble if you will be holy: Humility is of the Essence of the New Creature: *he is not a Christian, that is not Humble.*

And yet, oh how much of this pride have too many of us to charge upon our selves? when our eye is so much at self, and so little at God in all we do: when we are so tender, and so touchy at any thing that reflects upon our selves, and so little affected with the dishonour of God, when our very abasing our selves, is in order to the exalting of our selves. In our very confessions of the pride of our hearts, do we not sometimes hope, that the sense which we discover of this evil, will more advance, then the evil it self will impair our Reputation? When whatever evils we acknowledge by our selves, we are in hope they will not be believed: When we cannot bear it, to be reprov'd, or to hear from the mouth of another, what our own mouths do testify against us: When we love to speak in our own praise, or if we have more wit, then to be vainly boasting of our selves, yet we love to hear our selves commended by others

others : When we are envious at those that out-shine us, and so stand in the way of our Reputation ; when we are so impatient of being contradicted, that those that are not of our mind, are not for our company : Do not our Habits, our Looks, our Company, our Behaviour, our Distances which we keep from those below us, sadly discover what there is in our hearts ? Oh Brethren, how is it that our hearts tremble no more, to behold this monstrous devillish sin appearing in us ? How can we take pleasure ? How can we take comfort in the best of all our Parts, or Duties, or Enjoyments, which are so stain'd with this Pride ? which is even as great an ornament to any true worth that is in us, or in any thing we do, as a Blister, or a Carbuncle to a beautiful face : How is it that we do not oftner question whether such a measure of Pride as we find in our selves, can stand with true Grace ? How is it that we are no more asham'd to draw nigh unto God, when our hearts tell us, how false we have been to him in all our services ? What an *Image of Jealousie* have we set up ? another God besides the Lord, which must at least divide with him in all the fruits that are growing up, out of any thing we have received from him.

Christian, Labour to know thy self more thoroughly ; and amongst all the lusts of thy heart, which might, if understood, bring thee low, take particular notice of this thy self-exalting spirit ; and if this do not abase thee, and shame thee, and lay thine honour in the dust, thou art proud indeed.

5. *Be Moderate.* In the use of creatures, I mean, be ware of Excess; eat and drink for service, not barely for pleasure: Let not your Lord be a loser by his bounty to you, lose not a duty in a Dinner; a full meal makes many a drowsie and short duty. If you be given to appetite, take heed, *give not to your appetite* all it craves; let not appetite, but conscience, be your measure: Eat not your Souls into leanness, let not your Table become your snare, and that which is given you for your health, become your disease: When you are at your meat, remember your work, and let that limit you; be only so free in your food, as may make you more fit for service: He that hath such a race to run, such a warfare before him, must be *temperate in all things*, or he may lose the goal and the battail; not only Drunkards and Gluttons, but even Christians that are accounted sober, are more peccant this way, then they are ordinarily sensible of. Their spirits would be more free, their services would be more lively, their work would be more easie, and their way more pleasant, if they were but more temperate. Christians, let this Scripture meet you at your Tables, as well as elsewhere, *Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

6. *B: Moderate,* Phil. 4. 5. *Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.* Maintain such a Tranquility and Serenity of mind, let all be quiet, and in such a due and equal composure within you, that it may appear in your carriage without. Let there be no noises, nor tumults, but as much as possible, let there be a constant silence and calm upon your spirits. Moderate your cares, moderate your fears, moderate your passions; Say to your spirits, when they begin to swell, as Christ to the wind and waters, *Peace, be still:* Get the command of all with-

in you, and keep them under constant discipline ; be careful for nothing, fear nothing, be impatient at nothing, that whatsoever happens to you without, you may be able to say with the Apostle, *None of these things move me.* Be not like those weakly bodies, whose temper changes with the weather. Be able to bear whatever changes happen from abroad, without any perturbations or perplexing commotions at home. *In your patience possess ye your souls.* Christians, if you can but keep your temper, whatever happens, you may keep your way, and hold on your course whatever happens. An heart out of quiet, will put your whole man out of course. If you can but be quiet and patient, you may be any thing, you may do any thing, that God will have you be, or do. Let your fears, and your passions, and your impatiencies loose, and whither will they carry you ? When you should be denying your selves, you will then be shifting for your selves ; when you should be following Christ, you will then be running from Christ ; when you should be working out your salvation, all your care will be taken up how to save your selves in a whole skin. Let these be well laid and you will have nothing to do, but to follow your work, and to run your Race which God hath set before you.

V. *Carry your selves well towards others.* A Christians work doth not lie all about himself ; Though your own Souls be concerned in all you have to do, yet your care must not be confin'd to your selves alone ; you must have a due respect, and a due carriage towards others also. Carry your selves well :

1. *Towards all men.* Let your Conversation be as in all things, so towards all men, *as it becometh the Gospel.* I must contract, and here give you only some short hints.
1. *Be True.* 2. *Be Just.* 3. *Be Merciful.* 4. *Be Peaceable.* 5. *Be Courteous.*

1. *Be true.* Take heed of the way of lying ; let sinners know that *a lie is of their Father*, and not of yours. Let the *Word of a Christian* be Sacred. Make sinners say of Saints, the same which God sayes of them, *They are Children which will not lye* ; let their experience force them to acknowledge, *This spot is not the spot of Gods Children*. Be true. A Lye is,

1. Contrary to God, who is a God of truth, & cannot lie.

2. Conform to the Devil, the Father of lies.

3. Destructive to Society : there can be no trust, where there is no truth ; and no Commerce with those that cannot be trusted.

Temptations to Lying are many, and men are especially tempted to it, in these two cases.

1. In case of any faults committed. What can't be excus'd, must be conceal'd : and for want of a better covering, they must hide it under a lie.

2. In their dealings in the World. In their buyings, and selling, and trading. *The trade of lying gets into every trade*, as if there were no living, but by lying. The Seller must have his lie ; there must be a lie to set off the Wares, *Its special good, the best of its kind*, when may be tis stark naught : A lie to set up the price, *It stood me in so much, I cannot abate* : A lie to bring on the buyer, *I will not abate*, when, it may be, the next word is a lower price. The buyer must have his lie ; a lie to bring down the price, *Its naught, Its naught*, saith the buyer : A lie to bring down the seller, *I will not give your price*, and yet gives it. Oh, how common an evil is this, and how little considered ! How few are there that have great dealings in the world, and can altogether acquit themselves of it ? How many are there, that live upon lies ? that feed themselves with lies ? that cloath themselves with lies, their unlawful gains, that their trade of lying hath brought them in.

Christians, especially you that are most ordinarily under such temptations, be sensible of this evil, and avoid it : be resolved and watchful : Resolve to be true ; be true, though it be to your loss ; be losers rather than lyars ; Sell not conscience with your commodities, for a penny or two pence profit extraordinary. Resolve to be true, and be watchful ; Consider what you say, before you speak, that you be not guilty of falshood, neither purposely, nor unwarily.

2. *Be Just.* Observe that Rule of Righteousness, *Do to others, as you would they should do to you ;* And let this Rule be observed in all your words, yea, and your thoughts also, as well as *actions* ; if you would not be wronged, do not wrong ; if you would not be oppressed, do not oppress : if you would not be defrauded, do not defraud ; and so, if you would not be defamed, or reviled, do not defame, or revile ; if you would not upon every report, or groundless surmize, be evil thought of, do not think evil of others. You that profess Christianity, are *you* altogether faultless upon this account ? Would you that all that should come upon you, which by you hath fallen upon others ? Would you that all the world should be to you, what you have been to any in the world ? If you have not been knowingly *unjust in your dealings*, yet have you neither been *injurious in your words* ? Would you that your faults or infirmities, should be the ordinary discourse, and table-talk, and merriment of others, and have not yet other infirmities, or faults, been yours ? Would you not be causlessly suspected, condemned or despised in the thoughts of others, and have you never dealt thus by others ?

Is not this too common, and yet little considered ? When you are together, every evil report that's going, either for want of other discourse, or from a worse cause

cause, must be brought in to fill up the time ; and evil reports, quickly beget evil thoughts and surmises. *Do as you would be done by ; if you would not be thus dealt with by others, deal not so with others.*

3. *Be merciful.* Luk. 6. 36. *Be ye merciful, as your Father is merciful.* You have a merciful Father, you have a merciful High Priest ; be ye also merciful : As you have received mercy, as you look for mercy, be careful to shew mercy. Give to him that asketh, lend to him that would borrow, visit, relieve, refresh the bowels of him that is in misery. Be chearful in shewing mercy, let your hearts give as well as your hands. Be liberal, be bountiful : He that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly : He that is merciless to the bodies of men, is therein cruel to their souls. Hardness and niggardliness in Professors of Religion, will disgrace their Profession, and harden the hearts of sinners from entertaining the Gospel ; *Can you persuade me that this is the way of God, that this is true Religion ? What a merciless Religion, a merciless Profession ? God keep me from such a Religion.* Your feeding of hungry bellies, your cloathing of naked backs, may be a means to save many a soul from death. The penny besides that it may gain thee many pounds, a plentiful reward, it may gain many a soul to thy Lord.

4. *Be peaceable,* Mark. 4. 50. *Have peace one with another,* Heb. 11. 40. *Follow peace with all men.* The Lord is a God of peace, Christians are sons of peace. *The wisdom which is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easie to be entreated.* Peaceableness stands

1. In an unwillingness to provoke or offend : A peaceable man will not break the Peace, is not quarrelsome or contentious, will not stir up strife, forbears all provoking carriage, hath no provoking tongue, he hath peace in his heart, and that brings forth peaceable language and carriage.

2. In an unaptness to be provoked. A peaceable spirit is a patient spirit.

3. In a readiness to be reconciled, *Jam. 3. 17. Easie to be intreated* : a peaceable spirit is hardly provoked, easily pacified.

4. In a forwardness to reconcile those that are at variance : A peaceable spirit, is a peace-making spirit ; such an one is both a blessed man, *Mat. 5. Blessed are the peace makers*, and a blessing to those he lives amongst. One angry, quarrellsome spirit, may be a plague, and one peaceable and healing spirit, may be a blessing to a whole society.

5. *Be Courteous*, Sweet and affable in your carriage towards all, *1 Pet. 3. 8*. This will much win upon the hearts of those you converse with, and beget their good liking of what-ever good they behold in you : This will both mollifie their spirits towards you, and make them more willing to hearken to you : Morosity and fierceness will fright them out of your company, and harden them against your Counsel. Your candor will be the sugar that will help to convey down any pill of admonition or reproof you give them which otherwise their stomachs would rise against, and spit out in your faces. Carry your selves so to all, that you may convince them that you are their friends, the friends of their souls, whilst you appear the enemies of their sins : that your counsels are the counsels of a friend, that your reproofs are the wounds of a friend, which are better then the kisses of an enemy.

But still take heed that your courtesie to sinners do not lead you in a compli-ance with them in their sins, that what you intend as a Net to take their Souls, become not a Trap to take yours. Whilst you are a friend to their persons, beware you be not drawn aside to have fellowship with them in their wickedness. It is better

to be uncivil, then ungodly. Be as courteous as possible, yet so far only that your courtesie be neither a snare to you, nor an encouragement to them in their sins. Be wise as well as kind.

Christians, do not pass over these Second-table duties (which I have for brevity sake packed up into a narrow room) as the lower things of Religion, wherein you may be excused or dispensed with; which a little Praying or Confessing will make up, and so you may go on: Truth, and Temperance, and Justice, and Mercy, &c. are to be reckoned among the weightier matters of the Law; there is so much Religion in them, that there can be no Religion without them: Though there may be morality where there is no true Religion, yet there can be no Religion where there is not morality, *Micah 6. 11, 12. Shall I count them pure, with the wicked ballances, and the bag of deceitful weights? The rich men thereof are full of violence, and the Inhabitants thereof have spoken lyes, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth. Shall I count these pure? Are these my people? What, holy and not honest, religious and not righteous? What, sincerity without truth, a single heart with a double tongue? What, grace where there is no peace, nor mercy, nor temperance? What railers, and revilers, and quarrellers, and yet religious? James 1. 26. If any man seem to be Religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this mans Religion is vain.* A dreadful word! There are many Professors of Religion in whom an unbridled tongue is found: How many light and vain words, how many false and deceitful words, especially how many bitter and angry words do we ordinarily hear out of such mouths? what biting and devouring, what cutting and provoking, what reproaching and reviling language doth often break forth at the same mouths,

whence at other times we hear praying and blessing. But can such consider this Scripture without a trembling heart? *This mans Religion is vain.* Vain, notes two things.

1. *Empty.* Whatever Religion such men seem to have, there is nothing in it.

2. *Ineffectual:* That is vain that falls short of, and doth not reach its end, nor bring about that for which it is. The end of our Religion is salvation. Whatever Religion *such men have*, it will do them no good, nor stand them in any stead, it will never save their souls; they may dye and be damned, and lie in Hell for ever, notwithstanding all the Religion they have. All the *conclusions* that men make from such Religion, that they are in a state of grace and salvation, are false and deceitful; that faith, and that hope, and those prayers, which will consist with the reigning evils of the tongue, will never be any good evidence of a good state; That which cannot drive the Devil out of the tongue, will never prove Christ to be in the heart. And all the *expectations* that are hence raised of future blessedness, will undoubtedly deceive them. That Religion which will not tame the tongue, will never save the soul.

I insist the more on this, *because* however those evils mentioned, injustice, unmercifulness, intemperance, &c. may possibly be as *common*, and some of them as pernicious, and the prevailing of them as certainly concluding men in an evil state, as this; yet these evils of the tongue, being but words, are more apt to be passed lightly over, and notwithstanding all the mischievous consequences of them, to be less regarded.

But can you make a light matter of that which proves you damnable by, or *yes*? Hast thou spit out all

thy

thy Religion in thy furious fits, and yet wilt thou make nothing of them? By this biting and devouring tongue, you do not only consume one another, but you consume every man himself, your own peace, your own comfort, your own hopes, your Religion and salvation. You see by experience how it devours all the exercises of Religion; what duties are we fit for, whilst our tongues are on fire? Prayer must be laid aside, reading or conference of God, or of souls, are turned out of doors: God himself cannot be heard, Conscience cannot be heard, Souls cannot be minded, whilst those noises and tumults last. And that which doth destroy the exercises of Grace, cannot but destroy its *evidences*, and bring us at least to question it, if not to conclude it a nullity. I confess some evils of the tongue may consist with grace in the heart; but if this Scripture be true, *An unbridled tongue cannot*: Grace, cannot hold this unruly member under such constant government, but it will too often break loose; but where it is not brought under government at all, where the heart puts *spurs* to the tongue, but no *bridle*; where persons looking upon all this as a *matter of nothing*, allow themselves in it; and letting loose the reins to their tongues, do ordinarily surrender them up to their *lusts* and *passions*, to use at pleasure, and to vent themselves freely by, such men must first disprove the Scripture, before they can prove the truth of their Religion.

Christians, you that have been sick of this disease, of an evil mouth, bless the Lord if the cure be begun, but rest not till it be perfected. It will defile where it doth not destroy. It will defile your pames, your evil words will recoil; he that spits against the wind, his spittle is driven back in his own face. It will defile your Consciences; your hearts never send forth an evil breath,
but

but there is something of it sticks behind. It will defile your duties ; there will be a tincture on your Prayers of that foulness of your mouth, which your evil words have left behind them. It will defile your profession ; that will hardly be well spoken of, which will bear evil speaking: It will disturb where it doth not devour ; it will disturb you in your holy course, if it doth not quite divert you ; never look to prosper in holiness, or to be fruitful in good works, whilst you break forth into such evil words ; these lean kine, and thin ears of envy and contention, will eat up all your good fruit. I rather wonder to see any green in those Gardens where such Locusts lodge, then there is no more. Oh Brethren, let us no longer excuse, but judge our selves for this, let our bitterness become bitter to us, let us weep over it, let us watch against it, let us quench those fires within, that there be no more such flames and smoke without ; let us be sensible of those inward inflammations, of that unquietness and unpeaceableness of our spirits, whence all our outward paroxysms arise ; they are our foul stomachs that furre our tongues.

We lay the blame of all upon temptations and provocations, but they are our lusts, our lusts that are in fault, which war in our members. Let us be more sensible of these ; let us be humbled, let us be ashamed, that we that profess our selves sons of peace, should harbour such Sons of contention in our hearts. Let the experiences we have had of the loss we have sustained, of the guilt we have contracted, the wounds that we have given to our Brethren, to our own souls, to the Gospel of our Lord already ; let these set us a purging out this sower leaven. Let Salt be cast into the Fountain, that the streams may become sweeter, and when the Fountain is healed, then let us sweep the Channel : Let there neither be war any longer in our hearts, nor a Sword in our mouths. Let

us beat our Swords into Plough-shares, and our Spears into Pruning-hooks. Let our words plough up the heart, and not break the heads; let them pare off, and reprove the sins, and not reproach the faces of our Brethren : Let us counsel and admonish, and comfort one another, and provoke to love and good works ; but let there be no more bitterness, or strife, or envying, or quarrels sings found amongst us ; let us leave these evil fruits to grow only on evil Trees, where we can expect nothing else. Whilst we cannot look to gather Grapes of Thorns, or Olive-berries of Thistles, let not the fruit of the Bramble, or the prickles of the Thistle, be found sprouting out of the root of the Olive. Let the Saints still be found what they were of old, *Doves, Lambs, Lillies* among thorns : Let there be *nothing that hurts or offends in all the Mountain of the Lord*. Let the pricking bryar, and grieving thorn, be rather in our sides, then in our mouths : Let blessing, and praising, and praying, and intreating, take up all the room, that there be no place left for wrath and contention.

And whilst we take this care about our words, let us take as great a care about our works. Let there be no *violence* in our tongues, nor *violence* in our hands. Let there be no deceit in our lips, nor falshood in our dealings. Let us speak the words of truth and soberness, and let us keep the way of righteousness and peace, Let us walk humbly with God ; and let us do justly, and love mercy, and live peaceably with men. Let good words and good works meet together ; let Religion and Righteousness kiss each other ; let Peace spring up out of the Earth, as Grace hath looked down from Heaven. Let us *adde to our Faith Vertue, and to Vertue Knowledge, to knowledge Temperance, to Temperance Patience, to Patience Godliness, to Godliness Brotherly Kindness, to Brotherly Kindness Charity*. *Fin*

nally, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any vertue, if there be any praise, think on these things. Brethren, so speak ye, and so walk ; the things do, live in peace and love, and the God of peace shall be with you.

2. In special. Carry your selves well in, and toward your Families. You that are Governors of Families you have more souls then your own to look to ; you have *curam animarum*, the charge of souls lying upon you. You are not only to look to your Families in matters civil, but in matters of Religion. In the Law the Master of the Family was by the appointment of God, to circumcise all the Males in his house : In the fourth Commandment, the Master of the Family is charged, not only to keep the Sabbath himself, but to see that his whole Family kept it. *Thou shalt do no work therein* ; and not only so, but neither thy Son, nor thy Daughter, &c. Parents are required, *Eph. 6. 4. To bring up their Children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord* ; to nurse them up for God, to nourish them up in the words of Faith and good Doctrine, to suckle their souls with the milk of the Word, as well as their bodies with the milk of the breasts. Now, where there is a charge of souls, there must an account be given of souls. When there is a child brought forth, or a Servant brought into thy Family, God says to thee, as the man in the Prophets Parable, *1 Kings 20. 39. Keep this man, look to this man, if he be lost, thy life shall go for his life.* If any in the house perish through thy neglect, thy life shall go for his life, thy soul shall go for his soul. This is thy charge, and if thou be not faithful, so shall thy judgment be.

But what must we do for the right ordering and governing our Families ? Why,

1. Instruct

1. Instruct your Families, teach them the way of the Lord ; dwell in your houses as men of knowledge, and make God known to all yours, by reading, and acquainting them with the Scriptures, which are able to make them wise unto salvation, by Catechizing them, &c.

2. Endeavour their Conversion to God, by speaking often to them, of the sinfulness and misery of their natural state, of the nature and necessity of conversion, by enquiring often into the state of their Souls.

2. Bring them into Covenant with God, as you have already done it virtually, in bringing them to be baptized, so when they are grown up, and well instructed in Principles of Christianity, and made sensible of their Baptismal Engagement, endeavour to bring them to an express dedicating, and engaging themselves to the Lord, according to those directions that have been formerly given to Christians in general.

4. Teach them to pray, and call upon them often; and see to it, that they neglect it not.

5. Pray for them, and pray with them.

6. Dispense your favours and frowns, your corrections and encouragements, not only as they are more or less towardly to you-ward, but as they are more or less tractable and careful in the matters of God.

7. In your disposal of them, either to callings, or in Marriage, have a special regard to the advantage of their Souls. I can now but name these particulars, which I have formerly more largely insisted on, and pressed upon you.

8. Be examples of holiness to them, walk in the midst of your house with a perfect heart ; do not unteach them by your practice, what they have learned from your instructions ; do not teach them to slight your words, by the unsutableness of your ways to them.

For

For a conclusion of the whole, observe farther these four general directions : 1. *Be sincere.* 2. *Be Steady.* 3. *Be Fruitful.* 4. *Be Steadfast.*

1. *In your whole course, and all the particular actions of it, be sincere.* Sincerity is not a distinct grace, but notes the truth of every grace, and gracious action. There is a sincerity of, Our state, Our Actions.

1. There is a sincerity of our state. That notes the uprightness of our hearts in the main, and hath been already described in the Directions I have given, in the Duty of Self-examination.

2. There is a sincerity of our actions: This is twofold, either such as respects particular & singular actions, or the series of our actions, our whole course, 2 Cor. 1. 12. *This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that in all simplicity, and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our Conversation in the world, in all simplicity and godly sincerity:* There is a natural sincerity, and a godly sincerity; natural sincerity imports no more but simplicity, or plain-heartedness; when there is no guile or deceit in any action, no purpose to deceive, no pretence of what is not intended; no conscience of any evil in what we do, nor any evil intent in it. In this sense, God bears witness of *Abimelechs* integrity, Gen. 20. 6. Testifying concerning his taking *Abrahams* wife, that *he did it in the integrity of his heart*, that is, he knew no evil in it: He knew not that she was another mans wife, nor intended any wrong to her husband in it. Then there is also a godly sincerity in it: this supposes the sincerity of our state. He cannot have his Conversation in Godly sincerity, that is not first a godly man. It includes in it, not only truth, but faith and love, and ingenuity to God; not only a good meaning, but a good will to the work, and to the Lord, for whose sake we do it.

To walk sincerely, is to walk both as in the sight of God, as the witness of our uprightness, to whom we dare to appeal, and in the *power of the Grace of God*, which carries us on to pursue his honour and interests. The *opposite* to this sincerity, is fleshly wisdom, or carnal policy, which models our Religion, and the exercises thereof, in a consistency with, and subserviency to our fleshly interests: And hypocrisie or dissimulation, to which it is most properly opposed. And there is a twofold hypocrisie in our actions: Either total, that which denominates them hypocritical actions; or partial, when though as to the main the heart be upright and the actions be acceptable to God, yet there is some little mixture of deceit in it; which, though it be matter of humiliation to the doer, yet doth not wholly hinder the acceptation of what's done. As there is no person, so there is no action so perfectly sincere and upright with God, but there is some obliquities to be found in it.

Brethren, be upright in your ways, be true to the Lord, not putting him off with eye-service, but serving him in singleness of heart; be ingenious towards God, with *good will* doing service; whatever good words you speak, whatever good duties you perform, whatever good fruits you bring forth, let good will be at the bottom. Let not fleshly wisdom have any thing to do in the managing and ordering your spiritual wayes. You must be fools if you will be honest. *He that will be wise* (saith the Apostle) *let him be a fool*. So he that will be upright, let him lay down his fleshly wisdom. Let him not consult with flesh and blood, nor study to cast himself into such a mode, or limit himself to such a measure of godliness, as will best secure and advance his earthly concerns, but laying aside such considerations, let him follow the Lord in all things, whether it be right or wrong, as to matters outward and carnal.

Beware

Beware of hypocrisie and dissimulation: be not mockers of God, Gal. 6. 2. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked*, saith the Apostle. That is, either God cannot be mocked, there's no juggling with God, there's no deceiving of Gods Eye; when you have done all you can to varnish an empty or deceitful work, God cannot be deceived, his eye sees what it is; There's no dissembling with God, whatever there may be with men. Or else God will not be mocked, he will never be put off with, nor bear mocking services, *but as men sow, so shall they reap*. Look what their work is, such shall their reward and their wages be.

There is a twofold mock: 1. *A deriding mock*. 2. *A deluding mock*.

There is a *deriding mock*, or a putting of scorn upon persons. The enemies of *Jerusalem* mocked at her *Sabbaths*; the Persecutors and Crucifiers of Christ mocked him, and said, *Hail King of the Jewes*.

And there is a *deluding mock*, or a putting a cheat upon them, to deceive them: He that promises any thing that he doth not intend, he that doth any thing, or gives any thing, which is another thing then it appears to be, is a mocker. *Thou hast mocked me these three times*, said *Dalilah* to *Sampson*, when he pretended to have told her all that was in his heart, and yet had but lyed to her, *Judges* 6. 15. He that refreshes the needy with good words only, *be filled, be warmed*, or promises, *I will give, I will relieve you*, this is but *Mock-Charity*: He that payes his debts, or buyes his Commodities with Brasse-money instead of Silver, this is but *Mock-Justice*; and he that worships God with tongue-worship, or knee worship, instead of heart-worship, this is but *Mock-Religion*.

Oh, how much such mocking of God, are many Professors of Religion guilty of! There's nothing but words

in their Professions, nothing but words in their Prayers, nothing but words in their Confessions and Acknowledgements. Their Faith is a Mock-Faith, and their Repentance is Mock-Repentance, their Humility is Mock-Humility; nay, their very Alms and Benevolences, wherewith those that received them are refreshed and releived, are in respect to God a Mock-Charity, Mock-Alms. Whatever there is done, there is nothing of the heart in it; there's no good will in all their good works, and where that's wanting, the Lord looks on all as nothing.

Oh, remember and bewail all your hypocrisies and dissimulations: you are apt to think, at least would make others think, when you have been Praying, or Fasting, or keeping Sabbath, or visiting the sick, or releiving the oppressed, that you have been doing some great good services; when yet, it may be, you have been dissembling with the Lord in all, and had need go to pray again, not only, *Lord forgive us our sins*, our pride, or our covetousness, but *Lord forgive us our prayers*, Lord forgive us our repentance, our fastings, our Sabbaths, our Sabbath-mockeries, our Prayer-mockeries. Consider, Brethren, what an high provocation this is: 'tis no small sin to be mockers of men; but will a man mock God? *Mal. 3. 8. Will a man rob God?* saith the Lord. Though you dare to steal and purloin one from another, yet dare you be so highly impious and sacrilegious, as to rob God? *Ye have robbed me*, saith the Lord. You have not only robbed my Prophets, and my Servants, but ye have robbed me. *Will a man rob God?* So, *Will a man mock God?* *Seemeth it to you a small thing that you weary men, that you will weary my God also?* Saith the Prophet. Seemeth it a small thing to you to deal falsely with men, but will you deal falsely with God also?

Brethren, in all your wayes observe the rule, *Do as ye would*

would be done by. If you would not that the Lord should mock you, be you no longer mockers of God. Do not put off the Lord with *mock-duties*, unless you will be content to be put off with *mock-mercies*, mock-comforts, with a mock-pardon, and a mock salvation.

Beloved, Let us bewail our Hypocrisie; let us not only bewail and be humbled under any thing we have offered up to God, wherein we have been hypocritical *in toto*, have done nothing else but plaid the hypocrites; but let us bewail all those lower degrees of hypocrisie that have been mingled with the best of all our duties. Blessed be God, that though we have been too hypocritical, yet we are no Hypocrites; blessed be God for any sincerity that he hath seen in us, but wo to us, and shame to us, that there hath been so much hypocrisie mingled with it, O! let us fear an hypocritical heart: O! let us watch against an hypocritical heart; let us purge out all the remainders of this Pharisaical leaven.

Let there be truth in all we do, and as much as in us lies *nothing but truth*. Let us draw nigh to God with a *true heart*; Heb. 10. Let us be *undefiled, or upright in the way of the Lord*, Psal. 119. 1. Let our *works be found perfect before him*. Let us love in truth, let us speak the truth in love, let all our paths be mercy and truth. Let our hearts be in every word, in every step of our lives, let the heart do all, let the heart pray, let the heart hear, let the heart give, and lend, and forgive. Let the *grace of our hearts* do all; Let Faith pray, and Obedience hear, and Repentance celebrate our Fasts; let Wisdom guide, let Truth speak, let Mercy give, let Love forgive, let Patience bear, and Long-suffering forbear, let Temperance feed us, Humility cloath us, and integrity preserve us: Let Grace do all, and let God have all, Pride have nothing, and Covetousness nothing, and Envy nothing; let Lust neither be

a part in our doings, nor eat any of the fruit of our doings. Let there be written on all we have, or do, *Holiness to the Lord.*

Let us be more desirous to be holy, then to be accounted so; to be merciful, and just, and humble, and patient, then to be accounted such: to have a good Conscience in the sight of God, then to obtain a name among the best of men.

If we be not reckoned amongst the *ablest Christians*, for gifts, for parts, for endowments, let it content us that we are Christians. If we be not the *most skilfull Christians*, if our fruits be not the most fairest and most beautiful, yet let them be *fruits brought forth unto God*, the right fruit, sound fruit; if what we do be *weakly done*, yet let it be *honestly done*.

Let us be *Nathaniels, Israellites*, indeed in whom is no guile. So plain-hearted, and single-hearted in all our wayes, that though our Adversaries do, yet neither our God, nor our conscience may call us Hypocrites. Let us be able to appeal to God, as the witness of our integrity: *Lord, thou knowest that I love thee*, thou knowest that my heart is with thee: Let us be able to commit our selves and our wayes unto the Lord, as he that shall plead for us against all the slights, and censures of men: *My God shall plead my cause, my God shall answer for me.*

Brethren, Sincerity will give us boldness before the Lord: We shall be able to lift up our faces in his presence, and look in his face in peace; and he that can be bold with God, may be bold with all the world. He that can look God in the Face, may look his accusers in the face, his despisers and persecutors in the face. He that can *freely appeal* to God, can boldly appear before men: *The Sinners in Sion are afraid, fearfully surpriseth Hypocrites*: The sense of their guilt

and guilt sides with every danger they are in, strengthens every fear that comes upon them, makes their own hearts to fall upon themselves, puts a sting into every cross, starves them out of all their comforts. To God they dare not look, to Conscience they dare not look, their duties and wayes they dare not remember, they are forsaken of all their supports, and left to shake and sink under every trouble that comes upon them. 'Tis Innocency that hath boldness; dare to be upright, and fear nothing. *Go thy way, eat thy Bread with joy, drink thy Wine with a merry heart, for God accepteth thy Works.*

II. *Be steady and even in all your goings.* Be not off and on, in and out, *Prov. 4. 25, 26, 27. Prov. 33. 17. Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.* Alone, in company, at home, abroad, in thy duties, in thy business, in thy recreations, all the day, and every day, let to morrow be as this day, and next day as to morrow. In this evenness and equality of our lives stands the beauty and comeliness of them, when all the several parts of them bear their due proportion each to other. Let your wayes be confirm to the Canon, and let them be uniform: Be like unto God, and then be ever like yourselves, be unchangeable. We appear almost so many men, as we live dayes, or come into companies: We have more of the Moon then of the Sun, little light, but many changes and spots. Let not your conversation be so checker'd, let not Christians be speckled Birds, let there not be so many blacks among your whites, sometime something of God, sometimes as much of the flesh, what a deformity is it to a new garment, to have here and there a company of old rotten Patches? Now a little of God, and then as much of the Devil; Now in the Spirit, and then in the flesh; now serious and sober, by and by frothy, and vain; this hour in a D

vine Rapture, and the next in a fleshly frolick; now a little of Godliness, and then a patch of sensuallity. Be Christians, and be ever your selves, do not change your Hearts with your company. Be not of those vain ones who can cast themselves into any shape, can suit themselves to any Times or Company; who can weep with those that weep, and mourn with them that mourn, and pray with them that pray, and can also laugh, and be merry and jolly with those that are so. Let all your goings be established, be ever in the fear of the Lord.

III. Be fruitful. That ground is counted fruitful, which bringeth forth *good fruit*, and which bringeth forth *much fruit*. I have already directed you how to bring forth *good fruit*, now let me press you to see to it, that your *Fruits* do abound, 1 Cor. 15. 58. *Alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord*, Jam. 3. 17. *The wisdom which is from above, is pure and peaceable, &c. and full of good fruit*, John 15. 18. *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit*, Rom. 6. 19. *As you have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity: even so now yield your members servants to Righteousness, unto Holiness?* You have been the servants of Sin, be ye now the servants of Righteousness, and be ye as free, and as forward, and as fruitfull in the service of Righteousness, as ever you have been in the service of sin. You have added sin to sin, unrighteousness to uncleanness, iniquity to iniquity: as sin hath abounded and multiplied its fruits, so let grace also abound, and bring forth its fruits abundantly.

Let your lives be as much filled up with the works of Righteousness, and Mercy, and Holiness, as they have been with the works of the flesh. Brethren, time

was, when a little sin could not suffice you, a little sporting, a little pleasure would not serve your turn; you thought you would never have enough of the World, and lusts and vanities of it; why, prove your selves now to be as heartily the servants of Christ, as ever you were the servants of sin, by being fruitfully his, as ever you were fruitfull to sin. If Christ be a better Master, and a better pay-master, let him have more and more chearfull services. Bring forth good fruits, and of all sorts. As it is said of the tree of Life, that stands in the City of God above, *Rev*, 22. 2. so let it be said of every living Tree that stands in the Vineyard of God here below, that they bring forth *twelve manner*, that is, all manner of fruits; be fruitful in every good work, and bring forth fruit for every season: There are *Summer-fruits*, and there are *Winter fruits*, that God expects from you. By Summer-fruits I mean, those that are most proper for the dayes of your prosperity, as *thankfulness, watchfulness, fear, humility, self-denial, mercy, compassion, &c.* Your *Winter-fruits*, are such as God looks for in the dayes of your afflictions, *fasting, repentance, mortification, humiliation, submission, patience, &c.* Brethren, be not only good Summer-servants, but winter servants also; and when ever it's winter with you, fall close to your Winter-work, be much in the exercise of *Repentance, Godly Sorrow, Patience, &c.* Let the persecuting World see, That Godliness will not only *live*, but *flourish* too in the hardest Winter. The truth is, there is no such flourishing time for the Saints, as the time of trouble: Gods trees do usually bear best in Winter. The Winter-frosts do *ordinarily* bring forth and ripen their fruit better then the Summers warmth. At least the hard Winter prepares for a fruitful Summer. Beloved, is it Winter with any of you? Lose not this fructifying season, to your work, to

your

your work. Let your work serve you instead of fire to keep you warm. Let not the cold winds and storms chill and freeze your spirits, and so kill your fruits: let a fire be kindled and kept alive within you, the fire of love and zeal, and let your inward warmth supply the want of outward comforts and encouragements, for the cherishing and ripening of your fruit. Be either bringing forth fruit, or preparing for fruit, let not the plough stand still, let the Clods be broken, let the seed be cast in: If it be the day of your tears, sow in tears; it is good sowing in such a rainy day, and such a seed-time will bring forth a comfortable Harvest.

IV. *Be steadfast and unmoveable*, 1 Cor. 15. 58. Be not moved, either from the hope of *of the Gospel*, or from the obedience of *the Gospel*. Be not Apostates from Christ, let not the fear of the Cross make you weary of the yoke of Christ: Turn not back from the holy Commandment, for any tribulation that may come upon you. Suffer not your selves to be persecuted out of your Religion or Conscience.

Tribulations are Temptations, and will try what there is of God in you, what reality there is lying under all your professions, whether the Word of Christ hath taken any root in you: And such troubles will make the greatest Tryal of you, which fall upon you for righteousness sake.

There are some troubles that fall promiscuously on all, good and bad, and no difference betwixt the one and the other, but as an overflowing flood, bear down all before them: As in general Famine, Pestilences and Wars, in which it happens alike to the just and unjust, to him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not.

There are other troubles that fall only on the heritage of the Lord, on the best among a people. When the whole of the earth prosper and flourish, and those only in whom

suffering for Righteousness, and hope thou shalt never forsake him, whatever come upon thee, when thy heart tells thee, how much thou hast slighted Christ, neglected thy duty to Christ, *contented* thy self with a cold and heartless, luke-warm profession, without the power of Christianity; and that when thou hast had no pretence, or damage or danger that was hereby like to come upon thee? you that now keep at distance from Christ for the satisfying of a *lust*, have reason enough to fear, that you will utterly forsake him if you be put to it, for the *saving of your life*. You that in a *calm* can ordinarily remit of your Religion, for the pleasing a lazy heart will be like enough to renounce your Religion in a storm, to quiet a fearfull heart. He that can sell his Conscience for a Lust, will hardly be perswaded to buy it, with the loss of all that ever he is worth, Thou say'st it may be, with Peter, *Though I dye with him, I will not deny him*: I, but dost thou deny thy self for him now, deny thy pleasures, and thy ease, and thy companions now? Hast thou not many a time denied him a Prayer, or an Alms, when he hath called for it? Canst thou watch with Christ? Dost thou walk with Christ as thou oughtest? Dost thou live to Christ? Art thou faithful in bringing forth fruit unto Christ, the fruits of Holiness and Righteousness? If not, how dost thou think to be able to suffer for him? If the way of Christ be too strait for thee, thou wilt find his burthen to be too heavy; if thou canst not bear his yoke, thou wilt be less able to bear his Cross. Christians, consider what your wayes and your doings are at present; and if you find the Lord helping you to walk in all *good conscience*, now, you need not doubt of being enabled to witness for a *good conscience* when called to it. If you keep the word and do the works of the Lord, you may expect his help for bearing his burthen. If you be faith-

full in your lives, you are the more like to be faithful to the death, *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee in the hour of temptation*, Rev. 13. 10.

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Brethren, such failings by these lower temptations, I cannot wonder if they make our hearts shake at the fore-sight of greater. If every small party which the Adversary sends out against us, doth put us to the rout, How shall we stand, when he comes upon us with his full body? if we are overcome of the *foot men*, how shall

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Beloved, it is of greater import to Christians then they are aware of, both to observe themselves daily, and their carriages in these lower things, and to inure themselves to patience and meekness of spirit under them. Though it be no great vertue to be patient, where there is no provocation, yet there may be great benefit by it. If we could shame our selves out of this folly, and childishness of spirit, whereby we are so apt to be moved with every toy; we could reason, and pray our selves into such a calm and quietness of spirit, that we could keep our way, with the neglect of such disturbances, our lives would be more comfortable and honourable at the present; and we should be in the better preparation for any harder things that might come upon us. If we know how to be Christians among bryars and thorns, we shall be the better able to continue such among Spears and Arrows.

3. *What are you under the temptation of prosperity.* The World is a Christians enemy, it expresseth its enmity in its temptations; the end of all its temptations is to draw us off from God. Its temptations are of two sorts, either of prosperity or affliction, both driving at the same end, though in a different way.

Prosperity allures, entices, and flatters us away from God; it steals away our hearts from God, as *Absalom* stole the hearts of *Israel* from *David*, by fair speeches, by its fair and smiling face, thereby drawing us into a neglect and forgetfulness of God, to grow cold and remiss in our duty to God, to let fall our love and affecti-

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The stronger and the more dangerous of these two sorts of temptations, are held to be the temptations of prosperity; the world flatters more from Christ, when ever it can fright from him.

Now Beloved, if you have stood your ground against the former of these temptations, you may with the more confidence encounter the latter: He that hath been holy in prosperity, will be holy in affliction; he that knoweth how to abound, will the better know how to want; he that hath kept close to God, kept up his affections, kept on his way, against all the fawns and flatteries of the world, his Spirit is not like to be sunk under its frowns and threatnings: The God that hath preserved you from being lull'd asleep by the warm Sun, will also preserve you from being withered by the scorching Sun.

II. *Mortifie the flesh, with the lusts of it*. 'Tis corruption that makes affliction tedious and dangerous. Unmortified lusts will both make affliction to be the sharper, and also to be the greater temptation.

1. They will make affliction to be the sharper and more painfull. A Christian who hath two men in one, the *old man* and the *new*, hath two tender parts, which are apt to smart, and to be put to pain at every little thing that offends his Conscience, and his lust; that which offends Conscience, and makes it smart, is sin, that

whom some good thing is found, are the suffering people. When the Sun shines on the barren Mountains and miry Marshes, and the Storms, the Thunder, and the Hail fall only on the fruitful fields; when the Corn is smitten, and only the Thorns and Bryars escape. Such troubles as fall on the Righteous of the Earth, and for their Righteousness sake; when the bread and waters of affliction are given to Disciples, and in the name of Disciples, these are the most trying troubles. Such troubles as leave men to their choice, either to sin or suffer: when godliness becomes the common road to tribulation, and ungodliness is the only door that is left open, by which we may escape and shift our selves out of danger. Such afflictions as these will make the most narrow search and thorow tryal, whether we are godly indeed, or not.

Brethren, see that your hearts be so established with grace, that you stand your ground, and keep your way in such dayes of temptation. And that you may hold on, and hold on, and abide in the day of greatest tryals, take this course:

1. *Try your selves thoroughly afore-hand,* 1 Cor. 11. 3. *If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged:* though I cannot say, if we would try our selves, we should not be tryed; yet this I can say, if we would try our selves we should be the more likely to abide the tryal of the Lord. Try your selves afore-hand; And that,

1. *What you are in the state of your souls,* According to the instructions I have already given you in this matter

2. *What you are in your duties,* in your active obedience. He that is not faithfull in doing the Will of God, is not likely to be found faithfull in suffering the Will of God. He that carries himself Christianly in his present state needs not trouble himself with any fears and doubts how he shall stand in any future state he may be brought into.

The tryal that trouble will make upon us, is, whether we will be faithful in doing the Will of God, when we must suffer for it: Now he that neglects his duty, and cannot hold his heart to an holy conscientious course when he is in no danger, and his Religion is like to cost him nothing, what is like to become of this mans godliness, when it may cost him the loss of all? We read, *Dan. 6. 10. When a Decree was signed, that whosoever should ask any Petition of God or man, save of the King, should be cast into the Lyons Den: That Daniel prayed, and gave thanks to his God three times a day (as he had done aforetime:)* If Daniel had not used to pray *aforetime*, when Praying would bring him into no danger, he would not doubtless have adventured on it in such a time, when he saw evidently that it was like to cost him his life: Brethren, consider what your present course and care is: Do you pray now, and fast now, withdrawing your selves from the lusts and the liberties of the World? Do you now apply your selves to a sober, serious, self-denying life? Are you now active for God and your Souls, and have you been conscientious and watchful, and fruitful *aforetime*, when there was nothing to molest or discourage you? If you have been carnal, and vain, and remiss in the exercise of Religion, when you might have been as holy as you would, as strict and as zealous as you would, without any fear of suffering for it: If you have wasted away your encouragements, and spent out your Sunshine, in a careless unprofitable life, how do you think to be ever *useful* or serviceable in the dark? If you cannot now bear the pains of a godly life, how do you think you shall bear both the pains and the charges of it? If you could follow Christ no closer in the plenty of all things, how do you think to follow him, when it must be in hunger and thirst? Dost thou talk of suffering for Christ, and

suffering for Righteousness, and hope thou shalt never forsake him, whatever come upon thee, when thy heart tells thee, how much thou hast slighted Christ, neglected thy duty to Christ, *contented* thy self with a cold and heartless, luke-warm profession, without the power of Christianity; and that when thou hast had no pretence, or damage or danger that was hereby like to come upon thee? you that now keep at distance from Christ for the satisfying of a lust, have reason enough to fear, that you will utterly forsake him if you be put to it, for the *saving of your life*. You that in a calm can ordinarily remit of your Religion, for the pleasing a lazy heart will be like enough to renounce your Religion in a storm, to quiet a fearfull heart. He that can sell his Conscience for a Lust, will hardly be perswaded to buy it, with the loss of all that ever he is worth, Thou say'st it may be, with Peter, *Though I dye with him, I will not deny him*: I, but dost thou deny thy self for him now, deny thy pleasures, and thy ease, and thy companions now? Hast thou not many a time denied him a Prayer, or an Alms, when he hath called for it? Canst thou watch with Christ? Dost thou walk with Christ as thou oughtest? Dost thou live to Christ? Art thou faithful in bringing forth fruit unto Christ, the fruits of Holiness and Righteousness? If not, how dost thou think to be able to suffer for him? If the way of Christ be too strait for thee, thou wilt find his burthen to be too heavy; if thou canst not bear his yoke, thou wilt be less able to bear his Cross. Christians, consider what your wayes and your doings are at present; and if you find the Lord helping you to walk in all *good conscience*, now, you need not doubt of being enabled to witness for a *good conscience* when called to it. If you keep the word and do the works of the Lord, you may expect his help for bearing his burthen. If you be faith-

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that which offends Lust, and puts it to pain, is affliction. If Conscience be grown dead, or benum'd, sin never troubles, and if Lust be one dead, afflictions never trouble: kill your lusts, and you at once kill all your adversaries and afflictions.

What makes contempt and disgrace so tedious? why, it is the pride of our hearts. What makes poverty and want so greivous, but the covetousness and greediness of our hearts; the appetite will be quarrelling that it wants its dainties: the wanton mind will be vexed, that its deprived of its gay cloths, and rich attire, carnal fears, and world cares come in with their vexations: kill these lusts, and you give present ease to your hearts, 'tis sin that makes sufferings smart.

2. They hereupon, make afflictions to be the greater temptations: the more afflictions pain us, the more strongly do they perswade us, to take heed of that which brings them on us, and to comply with any thing that will give us ease or reliefe. Every pang and throb that comes upon us for godliness sake, will be clamouring and crying out against it, *away with it, away with it*: This professing, and praying, and precise walking, hath undone me; this Conscience hath broken my back, lost me my estate, my liberty, my friends, bereft me of all my comforts, my credit, my quiet, and created all my fears, and sorrows, and vexation which are upon me. Will remitting my zeal, dispensing with Conscience, cast of care, make me whole, and save me all this harm and loss? when then shall I thus torment, my self, when I have such a way open to escape all?

Brethren, would you be secure from such temptations? get your lusts slain, which put an edge upon them; Cut off all provisions from the flesh, that would keep it in heart. Allow not your selves liberty to live a sensual life; while you have opportunity, bring your selves under

under a voluntary restraint ; abase your selves, before God hath the abasing of you ; deny your selves, before God comes to deny you ; put the bridle upon your appetites, before God come and put bonds upon them and you, restrain your selves of your delicates, before God come and shorten you ; uncloath your selves of your wanton habits, before God hath the stripping of you ; starve your lusts to death, that the Lord come not and storm them ; let tribulations find their hard work done to their hand, and they will lie more easie.

Get your hearts so low, that the contempt of men cannot bring you lower, that the spoilers cannot make you poorer than your hearts have made you already ; give all you have to God, your ease, and your pleasures, and your liberty, and your estates ; give away all you have from lust to God, and then you will not be disquieted at whatsoever Messengers he sends to fetch it away.

When this is done, what hurt can tribulation do you? what temptation will it be to you? You will then dare to follow the Lord against all the World; you will not fear loss; you have nothing to lose, all is given a way already, you will not fear a Prison, your hearts have carried you thither already ; you will not fear disgrace or contempt, your hearts have brought you so low, that the pride of men cannot lay you lower ; you will not fear torments, when your flesh is dead & can feel no pain.

III. Be convinced of the dreadfulness of Apostacy, and the misery of Apostates and backsliders. Remember Lots Wife : God hath left us many Pillars of Salt before our eyes, to warn us of looking back.

Mat. 7. 27. *The fall of that house was great, that is, it was a dreadfull and terrible fall ; it was spoken of the house built upon the sand, which when assaulted by the windes and floods of persecution fell, because it had*

no foundation, and great or dreadfull w as the fall of it
fall from a house to an heap.

Heb. 13. 38. *If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.* Let him go, take him who will for me; take him world, take him Devil, for I regard him not. Thou mayest go whither thou wilt, thou art gone from thy God; thou must look to thy self, and shift for thy self as thou canst; God hath no further favour for thee, his soul is loosed from thee.

Rev. 10. 25. *Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his Garments (that keepeth his Garments)* that is, that keepeth his Faith, his Conscience, his Religion, his holy Profession, wherewith he is cloathed, that keepeth them clean, *ne poluantur*, that hath not defiled his garments; that keepeth them safe, *ne eripiantur*, that hath not lost his garments; that hath neither defiled his profession, nor lost his Religion and Conscience, he is a blessed man, Rev. 2. and Chap. 3. *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree of life, of the hidden Manna, to sit with me on the Throne.* To him that overcometh, that is, that holds out to the end. Hold out, and you overcome; overcome, and you shall reign; overcome, and you shall eat of the Tree of Life and hidden Manna.

Now Brethren, if a blessing be the portion of him that keeps his Garments, keeps his Faith, and keeps his Conscience, what shall be his portion, that hath lost all, and thrown off all? he that hath lost his holy garments hath woven to himself a cloathing of curses, not of blessings; if he only that overcomes shall sit on the Throne, shall eat of the Tree of Life, then what shall he eat, or where must he sit that is overcome? He shall eat the fruit of his own doings, of his lies and hypocrisie, and dissembling, he shall feed upon death and wrath, death shall feed upon him; and he shall have

nothing else to feed upon ; there is meat for him to eat ; and a place prepared for him, such as it is ; his place shall not be on the Throne, but under the Foot-stool.

Now put all this together, and you may see the woful state of Apostate Professors ; they are *monuments of vengeance* : though they have lost their *savour*, yet they will serve for *Pillars of Salt*, a standing dread and terrour, and warning to others, on whose Fore-heads is written, *Let him that thinks he standeth, take heed lest he fall*. They are clothed with curses, must feed upon fire, and have their dwelling under the Foot-stool in scorn and everlasting contempt.

Apostates are the worst of men. Those that have lost their Religion, have lost by their Religion, 2 Pet. 2. 21. *Better had it been for them not to have known the way of Righteousness, than having known, to turn from the holy Commandment*. Religion, which is a wing to Saints, whereby they rise up into Glory, is become a weight to hypocrites, to sink them so much the deeper in wrath. Apostates are in the worst case of all men.

1. They are the worst in Gods account. The Lord hath double quarrel with them, not only for being under the *Enemies Colours*, but that ever such varlets should have marched under his Colours : a quarrel with them for their Profession, for their Prayers, wherein they have but *abused his Name and Gospel* : God and his wayes have suffered from none so much as from *Renegado Disciples*.

2. They are the worst in the account of men, both good men and evil men : there are none that can speak well of *Renegado's* ; they are the sorrow of Saints, and the sport of Sinners ; good mens shame, and evil mens scorn, and the hate of all.

3. But especially they are the worst and most miserable of men, considered in themselves, they have

lost their Religion, but they have armed it against themselves. All the profession and Prayers that they have made, together with all the hopes, and joyes, and comforts that once seemed to grow up out of them; the remembrance of them (I mean when ever they come to remember themselves) will be as so many darts in their Livers, and stings in their hearts. All their hopes, and joyes comforts have given up the Ghost, and these Ghosts haunt them, and torment them with such thoughts as these.

Wretched creature that I am, where am I? what an exchange have I made? Light for darkness, wisdom for folly, righteousness for wickedness, gain for godliness conscience for credit, heaven for hell!

I was once as I thought, in the way of life, and had hopes I should have seen life: I made profession of Religion, and took pleasure in Religion; I walked after the Lord, and the thoughts of God were precious to me. I found comfort in Christ, I took sweet counsel with the Saints, and went to the house of God with them in company. Sabbaths were a delight, Ordinances were a refreshing to me, I have tasted of the good Word of God, and the powers of the World to come; and whilest it was thus with me, I had great peace, and was full of hopes that I should once see the goodness of the Lord in the Land of the Living.

But wo is me, where am I now? how hath my treacherous heart, that I never suspected, turned me aside from God, & spoyled me of all my hopes and comforts. I must now bid adieu to all: farewell Profession, farewell Religion, farewell Conscience, farewell Duties, Sabbaths, Ordinances, Saints, the sweet delights I took in them; farewell Joyes and Hopes for ever. Welcome Drunkards, Swearers, Lyars; welcome Turk or Pope, or Devil, I must now be of your side, and take

my lot with you for ever. Oh whither am I fallen? study well the many of such persons, and let that be warning to you.

IV. *Be Circumspect.* See that you do not unnecessarily pull sufferings on your selves; especially look to it, that you *suffer not as evil doers*. If your sin lead you into sufferings, God may leave you in them, and then what is like to become of you?

There is a suffering for our faults, there is a suffering for our righteousness without our fault, and there is a suffering for our righteousness, through our faults. We sometimes run our selves upon trouble when we need not: as when by our cowardly and imprudent managing and ordering our selves in some duties, we lay our selves open to those sufferings, which a little prudence might have prevented. We must be wise as well as innocent. Christians should never ordinarily expose themselves to suffering, if God hath so hedged up all lawful wayes of escape, that they must either suffer or sin.

Be so wary in your course, that you may not faultily suffer for the good that is in you, but especially see to it, that you *suffer not as evil doers*, and for the evil that is in you: To this end be careful;

1. That you speak not, nor do any thing in the matters of Religion rashly. 'Twas good counsel which the Town-Clerk gave the *Ephesians* when they were in a tumult and uproar about their Goddess *Diana*, Acts 19. 31. *Seeing that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and do nothing rashly.* Christians should be considerate, and well advised in what they speak or do, should mark and weigh their words and actions themselves, which they know will be so narrowly observed and weighed by others.

2. That you speak not, nor do, nor refuse to do any thing obstinately, or out of stomach, or animosity; Let your

your wayes be guided not by *passion*, or a *spirit of contradiction*, but by *conscience*, and *meekness of spirit*: be not self-willed, let nothing be done through *strife*, &c. *Phil. 2. 3.* Be *stedfast*, but not *stubborn*; be *faithful*, but not *wilful*; be *zealous*, but not *contentious*.

3. That you neither do, nor suffer any thing out of *pride*, or *vain-glory*; as the Apostle exhorts, *Phil. 2. 3.* Do nothing, so suffer nothing out of *strife* or *vain-glory*. Take heed that an affection of popular *applause*, of gaining the repute of *active Christians*, of *bold and resolved Christians*, be not it that leads you on. Your *pride* may cost you much, but will never bear your charge; may bring you into trouble, but will never bear you out.

4. That you do nothing *ignorantly*, or upon mistake; be *clear*, especially in those things which may be *costly*. Study your duty thoroughly, labour to see your way plain before you, to see the Pillar of fire, and of the Cloud going before you: Give heed to the Word of the Scriptures, which is a *light to your feet*, and a *lanthorn to your steps*: where you are clear you will be bold; but take heed of suffering upon a mistake. Your troubles will be like to open your eyes, and shew your mistake, and thereby put out your lights, destroy your supports and comforts.

5. Do not suffer *unpeaceably*. Suffer not for *unpeaceableness*, and suffer not *unpeaceably*; be patient, and you will be peaceable.

Brethren, see that you be thus well advised, meek, humble, peaceable, and clear in the grounds of your sufferings: And then,

V. Be *resolute*. Be sure you stand on good ground, and then resolve to stand your ground against all the world: follow God, and fear not men. Art thou godly; Repent not, whatsoever thy Religion cost thee; let sinners

ners repent, but let not Saints repent; let Saints repent of their *faults*, but not of their *faith*, of their *iniquities*, but not of their righteousness. The *Psalmist*, as holy a man as he was, was almost brought to it, his feet were almost gone, he began to say, when he considered the prosperity of the wicked, and his affliction, *Psal. 73* *Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed mine hands in innocency.*

Look to your selves you that stand, and take heed lest you fall: You that stand in integrity, take heed lest you fall away by your Repentance.

Repent not of your Righteousness, lest you afterward repent of your Repentance. Repent not of your Righteousness, no, nor of your zeal, or your forwardness, or activity in the holy wayes of the Lord. Your zeal, it may be, hath put you *in the front of the Battle*, where you receive the first and hottest charge of your enemies Reproaches and Persecutions, when others that have kept them more close, and been more remiss, are hid in the crowd, and more out of *Gun-shot*, yet wish not your selves a step farther back, or a cubit lower in your stature in the grace of God: wish not any thing *undone*, concerning which God will say, *well done.*

Repent not, and remit not of your zeal; think not of a retreat. Do not as the Kings of *Israel*, hide your selves under a disguise, feign not your selves to be worse in hope to escape the better; the arrow may find you though you be hid from the eye. Let not any of you that have been *Confessors* of Christ, return to be only his *midnight Disciples.*

For sake not the Lord, till you can find a better Captain, that is, till God cease to be God, till the Lord say, *Shift for thy self, there's no help for thee in thy God:* Retreat not from holiness, till you are sure you can retreat without loss. Be not false to Religion, till you find

find it false to you. If ever Godliness leave you in the lurch, renounce it and spare not. If ever Religion cost you more then it is worth, throw it off as you will.

Christians, know when you are well, and hold your own, be not betray'd out of your Refuge. If you must suffer, suffer for that which will pay you your wages; suffer not for *your sins*, but for *your Religion*; suffer not for the shadow or name, but the substance of Religion. If any thing in the World will save you harmless in your sufferings, and quit the cost of all your expences, it is substantial goodness. If there be any *Stigmata Laudis*, they are the marks which we bear in our bodies of the Lord Jesus. If there be any shame that hath a glory in it, it is the reproach of Christ, and the shame that you suffer for his Name. If there be any Cross that is a Crown, it is the Cross of Christ. If there be any Cross that can be undoubtedly called the Cross of Christ, it is the Holy Cross, or sufferings for Holiness. Those Martyrs that suffered under the Popish Tyranny, for witnessing against the abomination of the Mass, with the rest of their Idolatries and superstitions, had not a more clear and glorious Cause and Crown then thou hast, who sufferest for the power of Holiness.

If there be any thing in the world which God owns, and wherein his honour is nearely concerned, it is Holiness; if ever the Devil shewed himself a Devil, it is in his opposing Holiness; if ever he shewed him self a Devil in print, it is in those Books of reproaches and scoffs that are written against Purity; if ever he shewed himself a Devil in grain, it is when his hands have been dyed with the blood of Saints.

Brethren, if you will resist the Devil, if you will be on the Lords side, be on the side of holiness. If you will stand to any thing, if you will not be whiffing, inconsistent, Shaken Reeds, tossed up and down with every

ry wind, if you will fix any where, fix here, upon substantial godliness.

This is the great controversie betwixt Heaven and Hell, betwixt the seed of the Woman, and the Serpent, betwixt the Professing and Prophane World, about the substance and power of Godliness: Some quarrels and contests there are about the shadows and appendants of Religion, matters meerly circumstantial: but whatever noise there be made about such things as these, the bottom of the Controversie lies deeper, it is about the body of Religion, and not the skirts of its garments; it is he that will live godly in Christ Jesus, that doth and must suffer Persecution.

Art thou godly? Fix here, and let this be thy resolution: I live in a world of quarrels and contentions, contentions about shadows and circumstances: but for such things as these though I will not defile my self by complying in my practice, with what Conscience complies not, yet I list not to be contentious, nor to perplex my self or others about them. But by the grace of God, whilst God is a God of Holiness, whilst Holiness is the Image and Interest of God, whilst these words of the Lord, *Be ye holy, follow holiness, live righteously, soberly, and godly in this present world, whilst these* and the like words of the Lord stand unrepealed, by the grace of God I will be a Friend, an Advocate, a Confessor, a Practitioner of Holiness to the end of my dayes. This is my resolution, and in this Resolution I commit my self to God, and so come on me what will.

FINIS.

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THE
GODLY MANS
PORTION
AND
SANCTUARY:
BEING A
Second Part
OF
Vindiciæ Pietatis.

By R. A.

Printed in the Year, 1663.

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THe principal Doctrine, *Those that obey the Gospel, whatsoever, or whensoever they want, shall ever abide in a peaceful and blessed condition.*

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2. *Gods being with them, signifies,* **1.** *The Heart of God with them.* **2.** *The help of God with them.* **3.** *The Presence of God with them.*

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WHat the particular Reason of my choice of this Scripture this day is, if you compare my present station with the intent of the Apostle, in these words, you will easily understand.

These words of the Apostle, being part of the close of his *Epistle to the Philippians*, are his *Valediction* or *Farewel* to them: It is not unknown to you, that I must now be parted from you, and I have pitched on this *Scripture* to be the close of my twenty years Ministry among you.

God hath sent me among you to be a *Builder*, and I have chosen this Text to be a *Hammer* to fasten, and drive home those Nails of Instruction and Consolation, which I have been so long endeavouring to enter into you.

God hath sent me among you as a *Fisherman*, and I have chosen these words to be as the *closing of the Net*. Behold, once more the Net is spread, and I am now making my last Draught; and oh that it might have the same good speed, as *Peters* last had, *Luk. 5. 6.* it would then pay the charges, though the Net break.

God hath sent me among you as a *Husbandman* to plough, and to sow, and I am now come to *cover* what hath been sown.

What is my aim in Preaching, let be yours in Hearing: Oh that both *Preacher* and *Hearers* might heartily joyn in this desire! This once more, *God speed the Plough.*

In this desire and hope I drive on.

In

In the Text observe,

{ A Precept.
 { A Promise.
 { An Entail of the Promise on the Precept.

In the Precept we have,

1. An Act (*Do*).
2. An Object, (*The things that ye have learned, received, heard, and seen.*)

The Promise is in these words, (*The God of Peace shall be with you.*)

The Entail of the Promise on the Precept, you have in the connective Particle (*And*) which knits them up together. Do the Work, and have the Reward : Obey the Precept, and enjoy the Promise ; *Do what you have received and heard, and the God of Peace shall be with you.* Be careful of the former, and be not careful about the latter ; if the Precept be performed, the Promise shall be made good.

Doctr. 1. Christians must be *Learners*, before they can be *Doers*. (*What you have learned, that do.*)

Doctr. 2. He hath learned well, that hath learned to do well.

Doctr. 3. Christians eyes, as well as their ears, may help them on in Religion ; or, the holy examples of Ministers ; should be living Sermons to people, (*What you have seen in me.*) Therefore the Apostle exhorts, *Phil. 3. 17. Mark them which so walk, as you have us for an example ;* and *I Cor. 11. 1. Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ ;* that is, either I have been a follower of Christ, be ye therefore followers of me ; or else, *Be ye followers of me, as far forth as I have been a follower of Christ.* Those Ministers may go off the Stage with honour and comfort, who have left behind them the good seed of sound Doctrine, and the good savour of an holy example.

For

For mine own part, what my Doctrine and manner of life hath been among you, you are Witnesses, and God also. And however I have great Reason to judge and condemn my self before the Lord, and to bewail it, that my Conversation hath been less exemplary and useful, than, oh that it had been! yet I go off from you, with this testimony upon my heart, that I have not been of those who bind heavy burdens, and lay them on other mens shoulders, but will not touch them with one of their fingers; but my endeavour hath been, to press on mine own soul, and to hold out in my own practice, that Word of Life which I have preached to you; and therefore am bold, in this sense, to exhort you in the words of the Apostle, *Be ye followers of me, as far forth as you have seen me a follower of Christ.*

Doctr. 4. Godly Ministers, when they are parting from their people, would fain leave God behind them. Though it be not unusual, when the Lord sends them away, he goes with them; God and his Messengers, do not seldom take their farewell of people together; yet their earnest desire is, that though they must away, yet the Lord would stay.

Doctr. 5. Faithful Ministers would be *Messengers of Peace*, going, as well as coming.

As the Apostles first words were to be, *Peace be unto you*, Mat. 10. so some of this Apostles last words were, *The God of Peace shall be with you.*

Doctr. 6. When ever Ministers part with their people, if they can but leave godliness in them, they shall certainly leave God with them. Or,

Those that obey the Gospel, whatsoever, or whomsoever they want, shall ever be in a peaceful and blessed condition.

These things do, that is, live in the practice and power of that Doctrine of godliness, *which you have received*

ved, and heard; and then fear not, *the God of Peace shall be with you.*

This Doctrine I shall fully prove to you, after I have premised,

That the Doctrine which I have preached to you is, the *Doctrine of Godliness*; the sum whereof take in these four particulars:

1. That Jesus Christ, who came into the World to save sinners, came also to sanctifie and purge them from their sins.

2. That those that believe in Jesus, must be careful to maintain good works, or to live a godly life.

3. That this godliness is not such a slight, and easie, and empty thing, as the mistaken World imagine; but stands in an exact conformity of the whole Man, Heart and Life, to the whole will of God,

4. That as whosoever believes not in Jesus, so whosoever is short of this true sincere godliness, cannot be saved.

This is the sum of that Doctrine which I have preached unto you; which being the eternal Truth of God, I herein embarque my own soul and life, desiring to be found in that same Jesus, and to be found walking in that same way of Righteousness which I have declared unto you.

2. That my design and aim in preaching this Doctrine to you, hath been, to beget in you, and through the influence and assistance of the Eternal Spirit, to bring you to this true godliness. I have travelled in birth with you, that Christ might be formed in you; that I might leave you possessors and partakers of that grace which accompanies salvation; that your faith might stand not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God; that your Repentance might be Repentance unto life, not to be repented of; that you might obey
from

from the heart, that form of Doctrine that hath been deliver'd unto you, that you might stand compleat in all the Will of God; that you might be holy and harmless, the children of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked generation, amongst whom you must shine as Lights in the world, holding forth the Word of Life: that being rooted and grounded in love, you might comprehend with all Saints, what is the height, and depth, and length, and breadth, and might know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fulness of God: To this end have I taught every one, and warned every one, that I might present you Perfect in Christ Jesus.

3. That as far forth as the success hath answered my design and aim upon any of your souls, so far forth stand you intituled to this glorious promise in the Text, *The God of Peace shall be with you*, Looke how many souls there are amongst you, that live in the power and obedience of those Truths you have received; to so many can I with confidence give this farewell of the Apostle without ifs or ands, *The God of Peace shall be with you*. To whomsoever the Lord hath been a God of Grace, to them will he be a God of Peace. Whoever amongst you have this God of Grace dwelling & ruling in you, shall certainly find this God of Peace dwelling and abiding with you: As for all others, though I can heartily make this my parting Prayer, *The Lord be with you, the God of Peace be with you*, yet I cannot turn this Prayer into a Promise, nor give you any assurance, *That the God of Peace will be with you*.

These things premised, I shall now give you the full proof of the Doctrine in the following Reasons. The Doctrine you remember is, *Those that obey the Gospel, whatsoever, or whomsoever they want, shall ever be in a peaceful and blessed condition.*

The Reasons are,

1. *The God of Peace shall be with them.*
2. *if God be with them, all things whatsoever befall them, shall make for their Good.*

Reas. 1. *The God of Peace shall be with them*; these things do, Live in the obedience of the holy Doctrine which you have received, and *the God of Peace shall be with you*. This glorious promise is pregnant with all the blessings that Heaven and Earth can afford.

If you ask why, what is there in it? I demand of you, What is there in God? God is in the promise, all that is in God, is here assured to the Godly. The *Philosophers* of old attained to some glimmerings of the excellencies that are in God, by these three ways.

1. *Per viam Negationis*, conceiving of him as a Being, removed from all things signifying imperfection, as ignorance, impotence, iniquitie, corruptibillitie, composition, alteration, or any limits or bounds of his Essence, Power, and Glory.

2. *Per viam Causaliatis*, conceiving of him as the fountain of all other Beings; and thence concluding, That whatsoever excellencies or perfections are scattered up and down in the whole Creation: are all united in him, from whom they had there Original.

3. *Per viam Eminentie*, by way of excellencie, so that whatever perfections, whatever goodness is to be found in any creature, though it be not to be found in God *formaliter*, yet there is that in him (he being the first cause of all) that doth infinitely, superabundantly answer them all. Though there be not the same specifick excellencies in him, not those very pleasures and delights issuing from him, which the creatures yield; yet there are such excellencies, such perfections, as transcend and surpass them all. The Scriptures tell us more positively and plainly, That God is Almighty,

Omni-

Omniscient, Omnipotent, Infinite, Eternal, Unchangeable, All-sufficient, Holy, Righteous, Gracious; the portion, the protection, the Rewarder, yea, the exceeding great Reward of them that diligently seek him. And this is he that is in the Promise. God is in the promise. I must not enlarge in this spacious field; I shall keep nearer the Text, and shall confine my self to these four particulars.

1. God is in the Promise as the *God of Peace*, as the Author and bestower of Peace. The greatest of blessings, is the blessing of peace. Peace hath all blessings included in it; it hath possession, fruition, and security; it hath plenty, pleasure, and safety; where there is no peace, there's no security for the holding, nor opportunity of enjoying what we have. Whatever we have, we have it as if we had it not. Peace is the greatest of blessings.

Peace with God is the most glorious of peace. What is there that's excellent, what is there that's desireable that is not comprehended in this peace with God? Where there's peace, there's *pardon*: guilt cannot consist with this peace; *being justified by faith, we have peace with God*. Where there's peace, there's *grace* and holiness: *there's no peace, saith my God, to the wicked*. Where there's peace, there's love and good will. As love, so peace is the union of hearts. The God of peace is with you, signifies no less than this, The Almighty God bears you good-will. These two, peace and good-will, are Twins: *On earth peace good-will towards men*. Where there's peace, there's life, everlasting life internal is the seed of eternal peace.

This peace is a portion; peace with God is our possession of the God of peace: This peace is a Sanctuary if the God of peace be with us, the peace of God will keep our hearts.

Christians, in the world you must have trouble; suppose you have, yet in him you shall have peace, who hath overcome the world, *Isa. 26. 3. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace* (in peace, peace, as 'is in the Original) *whose mind is staid on thee, Psal. 85. 8. I will hear what the Lord God will speake, he will speake peace to the people and to his Saints.* What a clattering is there in the world? what tumults and commotions are raised about the followers of Christ, as if the world were falling about their ears? The Devil speaks wrath, evil men speake death and bonds to them, breathing out Threatnings, Reproaches, Persecutions against them. In the midst of all this fearful noise, He hearken, saith the *Psalmist*, what the Lord God will speake. Whatsoever Men or Devils speake, He hearken, if the Lord God speake at the same rate. Oh no, he will speake peace to his Saints: Let the Sons of contention do what they can, the Sons of God shall be the Sons of Peace; they shall live in peace; they shall die in peace, they shall dwell in peace for ever, *Isa. 32. 17, 18. The work of righteousness shall be peace and the effect of righteousness shall be quietness, and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places:* Oh how great is the peace that they have who love thy law! Christians, fear not to follow God: let not that sad word, nor the fulfilling of it, scare you out of your duty, *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.* What if they do? whilst you are able to say, I am persecuted but I have peace; I am poor, — but I have peace; in a Prison, but I have peace; in a Wilderness, but I have peace: though all the world be against me, God is at peace, my soul is in peace; what discouragement should all that be to you?

2. He that is the God of peace, is the God of power.

He

He promises peace, and he promises no more than he can perform. He can create peace, he can make their enemies to be at peace with them: he can make a leagu for them with the Beasts of the field, with the Lions, with the most brutish among the people: he can say to the Proud winds and waves, Peace, be still, and they obey him: he can give them rest from the dayes of adversity: he can give them rest in the dayes of adversity: he can give his beloved sleep upon the points of Swords and Spears.

3. He that is the God of peace, is the *God of patience*. This is my great fear, that though God gives, yet I shall break my peace; The God of Peace with me! oh! this is he whom I dishonor and disoblige daily, by my distrusts, discontents, impatiencies, murmurings, and what peace to such an heart? what peace, so long as such unbelief, so much iniquity as I find daily within me, remains upon me? Will he, with whom no iniquity can dwell, dwell in that heart where there is so much iniquity, by which he is provoked every day! but he that is the God of peace, is also the God of Patience, who though he will not bear the iniquities of his adversaries, yet he will bear much with the infirmities of his people, *Psal. 89. 30, &c. If his Children forsake my Law, and Walk not in my Judgment; if they breake my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments, then will I visit their transgressions with a Rod and their iniquities with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.*

4. He that is the God of peace, is the *God of hope*. I have not peace in possession, whatever there be in the promise, I live in the fire, am born a man of contention. What likelihood is there that I should ever live to see a good day? my comforts are broken, my Estate is lost, my Liberty is gone, Friends I have none, Enemies

mies I have many, and mighty, I dwell in *Mesech*, I have my habitation in the Tents of *Kedar*; I am for Peace, they are for War: whither ever I look, round about me, before me, behind me, on the right hand, or on the left, all speaks trouble and terrour to me, I have no peace; what, nor no hope of peace. neither? where is thy God man? hast thou a God in thee, and yet no hope in thee! The God of peace, and yet no peace! The God of hope, and yet no hope! *The God of hope will yet fill thee with joy and peace in believing, Rom. 15. 13. Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God, for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance, and my God, Psa. 43. 11.* The God of hope will open a window of hope in the darkest times, a dore of hope in the most desperate cases. The God of hope will bear up the spirits of his Saints, in hope against hope; and this hope will never disappoint them. It shall never be said there is no peace, there is no hope, till it can be said, there is no God in *Israel*.

But how, or in what sense is it to be understood, that this God of peace will be with us.

I answer, in three particulars.

1. The heart of God will be with you. *Joseph's blessing, the good will of him that dwelt in the Bush, will be thy portion, Dent. 33.* What was the Bush? the Church, or *Israel* of God? What case was the Bush in? 'twas all on a light fire, 'twas all in a flame. Who was it that dwelt in the Bush? God was in the Bush, and that kept it from consuming, though not from burning. The good will of this God shall be with thee; his love, his favour, his care. *I love them that love me, Prov. 8. 17 The Lord loveth the righteous, Psa. 146. 8.* The love of God is the womb of all good. Hence sprang the morning Star; from the love of God came the Son of God: hence

hence came that *womb of the morning*, the blessed Gospel, which is so big with glorious grace, with light, life, pardon, peace, glory, immortality; from the love of God came the glorious Gospel of God. *The upper Springs*, all spiritual and heavenly blessings; the *nether Springs*, all earthly and outward blessings, do all rise, and bubble up out of this fountain, *the love of God*. *The precious things of heaven*, the precious fruits brought forth by the *Sun*, the precious fruits put forth by the *Moon*, the chief things of the ancient *Mountains*, the precious things of the *lasting hills*, the precious things of the *earth*, and the fulness thereof: All these flow in with the good will of him that dwells in the *Bush*.

Love is all; the Apostle tell us, *Rom. 13*. our love to God, is *the fulfilling of the Law*: that is, it will bring forth all that to God, all that duty and obedience which the Law requires. I may tell you, that Gods love to us, is *the fulfilling of the Gospel*: that is, it will pour down all that upon us, it will do all that for us which the Gospel promises. Look over the whole Gospel, read, and study every precious leaf and line of that blessed Book: and if there be enough in all that to make thee blessed, and to encourage thee on in thy holy course, all this is thine. Thou hast that love of God with thee which will fulfill the Gospel: there shall not one jot or tittle fail thee of all that the Gospel promises. *The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this, Isa. 9. 7.*

2. The *help of God* will be with you, the Lord will be your helper in the day of your distress, *Heb. 13. 5, 6.* He hath said, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*. So that we may boldly say, *The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can do unto me*. He hath said, *I will not leave thee*: and therefore we may say, *I will not fear*. He hath said, *I will be*: and therefore we may

boldly say, *the Lord is my Helper*. He hath said, he will not forsake, he will help; and who is he that shall say, *There is no help for thee in thy God?*

There's no man, whose case may not be so desperate as to be above all humane help; if he should cry out, as the woman to the King of *Israel*, *Help O King*; the King must answer, *If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee?* If he should cry out, *Help O man of God*: the Man of God must answer, *If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee?* If he cry out, *Help O my Friends*, my Wit, my Policy, my Purse; all these must answer, *If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall we help thee?* But what a case is there, wherein an [*Help Lord*] will not do?

Foolish men count their case desperate, when they come to their [*God help*] that's an usual expression to set forth the extremity and helplessness of any mans case. When we see men even lost in any misery, and their case even utterly hopeless, then to signifie our sense of such mens lost condition, we cry out *God help that man, God help that woman, they are lost creatures* I, but if men did understand & consider what the help of the Lord is, they would see there could be no case so desperate, but an *help Lord* might recover all: *1 Sam. 30. 6.* when *David* was greatly distressed, and all was gone, *He encouraged himself in the Lord his God.*

• Consider here two things:

1. What his case then was, he was in great distress; he had lost all that ever he had; his spoils that he had taken, were all gone, his Corn, and his Cattel, his Wives and his City were all lost, he had not an habitation in all the world; he had nothing left him but a poor Army, and these were worse than lost, they were even ready to fall upon him. *The people spake of stoning him but he encouraged himself in the Lord his God.*

2. What

2. What the event hereupon was, why God help'd him to all he had again, *ve. 19. There was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil, nor any thing they had taken: David recovered all.*

Hence note,

1. That a Christian when he hath lost all, hath yet a God to goe to at last.

2. Whilest a Christian hath a God to go to, his case is never desperate; let him but encourage himself in his God, and all will be recovered.

Sinners, triumph not over the poor people of God; when they are at their worst, when they are brought as low as your pride and malice can lay them; though they should be stript naked, & left destitute of all their comforts; though all the world should ride on their backs, and tread on their necks, yet rejoyce not against them; though they fall, they shall arise, when they are at their worst, there's still help for them in their God.

3. *The presence of the Lord shall be with them.* Whithersoever they may be scattered, they shall not be scattered from their God. That promise made to Moses, *Exod. 33. 14. My presence shall go with thee*, belongs to all the Israel of God, [*My presence*] in the original is *my face*, in the Septuagint, *my self shall go with thee*.

The presence of God is either, General, or Special.

By his general presence he is every where :

1. *Per essentiam*, he fills all things.

2. *Per Cognitionem*, he beholds all things.

3. *Per Sustentationem*, he upholds all things.

4. *Per Dominium*, he governs all things.

But to let this pass, as not so proper to our purpose.

1. There is his *Special*, or his gracious presence,

sence, whereby he manifests himself to be with his people.

1. In some *visible and standing tokens* of his presence, as in those extraordinary, the Pillars of the cloud, and of the fire: and in those ordinary, the Ark and the Temple of old, and the Ordinances of the Gospel now.

2. In some *inward influences* and irradiations upon the hearts of his people.

3. In some *visible and signal effects* of this presence, whereof there are very many. There are, amongst others, these two notable effects of Gods gracious presence, which his people, by vertue of this promise, may with confidence expect,

} Conduccion.

} Covering.

They shall be *led* in their way, and they shall be *hid* in their way.

1. *Conduccion*: The Lord will be with them to lead them and guid them in the way that they should go, *Psal. 25. 9, 12. The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek will he teach in his way, Psal. 107. 7. He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a City of habitations, Psal. 5. 8. Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness, because of mine enemies; make thy way strait before my face.*

The Lord leads his people in their way, chiefly by his *Word*, which is a *light to their feet*, & a *lanthorn to their paths*: And sometimes also by his *Providences*, hedging up all by-ways, and leaving but one way open to them, that hath the least appearance of the way of God; so ordering the matter, that any other way that is before them, looks with too foul a face to leave any doubt upon them, whether that be the way of God or not.

It's never uncomfortable to the people of God, while they see their way before them: doubts about their way
are

are more perplexing than *dangers* in their way. When they know what God would have them do, they can chearfully trust in him for any thing they are like to suffer. Dost thou meet with Wolves or Lyons in thy way? Thou mayst bless God 'tis there thou meetest them, it would be ill meeting them else where.

2. *Covering*, or protection in their way, *Psal. 31. 20.* *Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man, thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion, from the strife of tongues* [Thou shalt hide them in thy presence] or face: thy light shall be their dark place to cover them: *Thou art my hiding place: Psal. 32. 7.* [In the secret of thy presence] the Saints hiding place is a secret: Such, where neither the pride of man can find them, nor can they understand what it is. Reproaches shall not find them, Persecutions shall not find them, whose souls are hid in God: they are not found when they are found; they are hid, when they seem to lie most open, and most exposed to mens will and lust. Sinners do not understand what refuge the Saints have in God; it is a great secret a mystery to them; as the joy of the Saints, the comforts of the Saints are a secret; *A stranger shall not meddle with his joy:* So is there safety or security; they do not understand what kind, nor how great security; what sure, nor what sweet repose the Saints find in God. The secret of Gods Presence is a sure & a sweet resting place for all his Saints; but how sure, and how sweet, no man knows, but they that enjoy it. The *secret intimations* of the care of God for them, of his everlasting kindness to them of his governing hand in all that befalls them, working it to their greater good; the *secret supports* and refreshings darted in as the beams of his countenance; their *secret sense*, that their head, their main is in safety, though they have bruises in their heel, will yeild such rest

rest in the day of greatest adversity, as men can neither see, nor take from them. The Pillar of the cloud interposed, did both hinder the *Egyptians* pursuit, and hide from their eyes the comfort of that light which shined upon the Camp of *Israel*. *Moses* knew what the comfort of Gods presence meant, when he said, *Exod.* 33. 15, *If thy presence go not with us, carry us not hence.*

'Tis (if considered) a great word. *Israel* was then in a Wilderness, among wild Beasts, among briars and thorns, in a weary pilgrimage; but they had God among them. The Lord was carrying them to *Canaan*, the Land of their rest, a Land flowing with milk and honey: but *Moses* prays, *If thy presence go not with us, carry us not hence.* We had rather be where we are, in a Wilderness with God, than to go to *Canaan*, and leave our God behind us, *If thy presence go with us, we are willing to go, when thou wilt, whither thou wilt, which way thou wilt; though by the Tents of Edomites, Ishmaelites, Moabites, Hagarens; though through the Armies of Anakims, Zamzummims: well go any whither, so God go with us.* The absence of God makes a *Canaan* worse than a *Wilderness*; the presence of God makes a *Wilderness* better than a *Canaan*; and this presence of God shall be the lot of all his Saints.

Reas. 2. If God be with you, all shall make for you: All Providential Occurrences and Events whatsoever; All difficulties, straits, disasters, disappointments whatsoever, that may come upon you, shall make for your good. *Rom. 8. 31.* *If God be with us, who can be against us?* Who can be against us? that is, None can be against us: Or if any be, yet those that are against you shall be for you, *Gen. 42. 36.* *Joseph is not, and Simeon is not* (said old *Jacob*) and mult *Benjamin* away too? *All these things are against me* but yet as old as he was, he lived to see all making for him, *Rom. 8. 26.* *We know*

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all things shall work together for good to those that love God. This is such a promise, as if it were thoroughly believed, would set our feet on the necks of all our fears and dangers, and will prove the truth of *Samsons* riddle, *Out of the eater came meat, and out of the strong, sweetness.*

Now because there is so great encouragement to godliness in it, I shall spend the more time in enlarging upon it, and shall shew.

1. What those things are which are especially intended in that comprehensive term (*all things.*)

2. What that good is which these things shall work to.

3 To whom these things shall work for good.

4 How these things shall work for good.

5 That they shall undoubtedly work for good to them that love God.

1. What those things are which are especially intended in that comprehensive term (*all things.*) Some there are, as *Augustine*, with others, who understand it *universally*, of all things whatsoever, whether good or evil; extending it even to the *sins of the Saints*. It's true, God doth often bring good out of these evils making use of former sins to be forces against future, as the thorn that did hurt in the garden, will be of use in the hedge; sin often becomes it's own death, which was intended to be the death of the soul: There's nothing that doth make the sinner more weary, and wary of sin, than sin it self: The review of what we have done, doth oftentimes fright us off doing so any more. When you look back on sin, and see it's face, (for sin carries its face in its back) you'll fear it the more, when ever you meet it again. There's no argument doth more effectually humble, and break the hearts, and make it more fearful and watchful against sin, than the shame, and

and the smart of those sins we have fallen by : he that hath felt the wound, will take heed how he plays with edge-tools. This is true, God doth often make this use of sin to be its own cure; and therefore 'tis not seldom seen, that the *chief of Sinners* have come to be the *chief of Saints*. Yet, besides, that this is not the subject-matter that the Apostle is here treating of; 't is those that bring sin within the compass of this promise, and make this to run into the sense of it, that even all the sins of the Saints shall work for their good; let such tell us how, or in what way it's imaginable that the *sinful drayes* of such who back-slide from God; and never recover to their former life and vigour, but live and die in a languishing state of soul; let them tell us how such sins can be imagined to work for their good? till then, we must enter our dissent from this interpretation.

This then is not the sense of the promise; that all sins shall work together for good.

And yet if it were, it would be but a poor argument to take the more liberty to sin; because God will turn it to good; this would be even as rational, as for a man to tear his flesh, break his bones, pluck out his eyes, burn his house, &c. because God will turn all his sufferings to good: he is little better than mad, that would not conclude such a man out of his wits.

Others restrain it to the *evil things* that befall the Saints, not the *turpia*, but the *tristia*, their sufferings & afflictions; to that vanity and those vexations they are in bondage under, and under which with the whole Creation they groan and travel in pain, waiting for their redemption, of which the Apostle had been treating in the former part of the Chapter. And yet while they pitch the sense especially on such things as these, they grant it may be extended to all other things, sin
only

only excepted; *ad omnes res, creaturas eventus, tum secundos, tum adversos*, to all things and events, whether prosperous or afflicting. So *Parens*, with others.

And these I take to have hit the right. All heavy things, all the sufferings and afflictions of the Saints; and not only these, but all things else whatsoever, that in the whole course of Providence be their lot or portion; all the dealings of God with them, all the dispensations of Providence towards them, shall all work for their good.

2. What is that good which these things work to the Saints; or in what sense all things may be said to work good to them. The sense in general is this, They shall all work to their welfare, they shall all happen to them for the better; there shall nothing befall them, but one time or other they shall have reason to say, 'twas well for me that it was thus with me. The wisdom and goodness of God did cut out such portions continually for me, did lead me thorow such a *series* and succession of cases and events, which though I could not understand, yet now I see that every condition, every contingency and occurrence of my life, through which Providence led me, was useful, and could not well have been wanted, but it would have been the worse for me. Thus in the general.

Particularly, for the fuller understanding what good it is that all things, to consider, That there is a twofold good of the Saints; such as they obtain and enjoy whilst they are *in via*, in their way or course; or such as they shall obtain when they are *in termino*, when they are gotten to the end of their way, when they are come to their place. Or thus, there is a threefold good of the Saints, Temporal, Spiritual, Eternal.

I. *Temporal good*, or our *bona corporis*, the outward good things of this life, which may serve and please,
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and delight us in these dayes of our pilgrimage, which may abide with us, and attend us to our graves, but there will take their leave of us.

2. *Spiritual good*, or our *bona anime*, and those are either, 1. External, as the ordinances of God; the Light, Liberties, and Priviledges of the Gospel; the society and communion of Saints, and our peaceful and plentiful enjoying of them. 2. Internal, as spiritual grace, faith, love, hope, patience, &c.

3. *Eternal good*, or that glory and joy, that everlasting rest and peace, the possession of that inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that is reserved in Heaven for us.

Now here note these things;

—1. That our *bona corporis*, our outward good things, are only good for us, as they are conducive *ad bonum spirituale*, to the good of our souls, The *bona via*, are only good in the event, when they tend to the *bonum Patrie*. This World is but a Nursery for Eternity; we are planted in this, in order to our transplanting into the other World, and whatever we have here, is either good or evil, according to the respect that it bears to hereafter: as far forth as our immortal part is improved by these perishing things, so far forth only are they good for us. He that hath this worlds goods, and is not hereby made more rich towards God; he who prospers in this world, and yet his soul doth not prosper: much more, he whose worldly fulness becomes the emptiness and leanness of his soul: Are these good things good for him? Is he in prosperity upon a true account, whose soul prospers not? it is not ever good to prosper in the world; it cannot be universally said, It's good to be rich, its good to be in health, its good to be in honour, its good to be at liberty: the contrary may sometimes be true; its good to be poor, to be sick, to be

be in disgrace, to be in bonds; the necessity of our souls doth not seldom require it: Then alone is it good to be full and to abound, when our outward abundance fartherers our spiritual welfare.

Christians, could we receive this Truth, That our outward good things are only good for us, as far forth as they conduce to our spiritual good, could we receive this Truth, and live under the power of it, what a different judgment should we then have of all these worldly matters, from what we have! and how strangely would the course of this World be then changed! Would there then be such violent and eager pursuing these carnal things? Would there then be such Whining and complaining, and murmuring at every cross providence? We would then say, This may be good for me, good for my Soul, how sad soever it looks.

2. That the external spiritual good things the Ministry and Ordinances of the Gospel, &c. are so far good to us, as they conduce to our internal spiritual good: and they being ordinarily so, it must be concluded, that ordinarily it is good for us that we enjoy them, and be not deprived of them. God may see the cutting Christians short of these Priviledges and Liberties, to be sometimes needful for them; and then even this also makes for their good, whereof more anon.

3. That our inward spiritual good is good for us, so far forth as it tends to our eternal good; and therefore grace is ever good for us, It's ever true, it's good to be holy, good to be humble, to be in fear of God, and to flourish in his grace. We may have too much money, too much credit, but we can never have too much grace. Our greatest flourishing & fruitfulness in grace, will certainly abound to our more full reward.

4. Note, That this is the plain sense and meaning of the promise, *All things shall work [for good]* that is,

whatsoever befalls, shall certainly promote our internal and eternal welfare and as far forth as the outward privileges of the Gospel, yea, and the good things of this Life, conduce towards this, all shall work for these also. If it be good for us to be rich, if it be good for us to be in honour, good for us to be at liberty; good for our souls, good in reference to our eternal estate; if it be good for us that we enjoy the Ministry of the Gospel, there shall nothing befall us that shall hinder; there shall be nothing wanting to us that might further this our good.

The sum is, That all providential dispensations shall be so ordered, that we shall want nothing but what is better want then have: We shall suffer nothing but what we cannot well be without, but what the good of our souls requires: and that which we do possess, and that which we do suffer, shall not fail of bringing about its end, the advancing our eternal good.

And if this be the meaning, what a glorious promise is this? what can any rational man desire more? nothing shall befall him, but shall be for his good: he shall be deprived or kept short of nothing, but what he had better be without than have. He that is unsatisfied with this promise, it is either from *Lust* or *Unbelief*; either he doth not believe that God is true, and will perform this Word, or else 'tis because his Lust must be satisfied, though with the denial of his Reason and Interests: he that desires an Estate in the World, Ease, Pleasure, Liberty, or any thing else upon any other terms: but as they may be for his real good, hath as much lost his wits, as his faith; and he that will take upon him to know what's good for him better then God. may as well take upon him to govern the World. You may with as good reason desire a Fever, or a Dropsie, that you may have the pleasure of your drink; as for the
plea-

pleasures that carnal things would bring you in, to desire them, when they would be a snare to your souls.

3. To whom these things shall work for good: *To them that love God*: to them that are called according to his Purpose: To the people of God, who, you see, are here described by their *Election* and *Vocation* [the called according to his purpose] and their *Sanctification* [they that love God.] Love is, as I told you before, the fulfilling of the Law. Love God, and you will live in the obedience of his whole will: these are the people to whom this Promise is made; prove your Calling and Election, prove your Sanctification, and you may write your names in this glorious promise: *All things shall work for your good.*

To those that are Rebels and Reprobates from God, all things shall work together for evil. Whilst things hurtful work together for good to the Saints, all good things work together for the hurt of sinners: their peace hurts them, their plenty hurts them, their pleasure hurts them: yea both their prosperity and adversity; their plenty, and their poverty, their pleasure, and their trouble; their honour and disgrace, and every thing that befalls them turns to their prejudice. Their prosperity destroys them, their Table is their Snare, their Pleasures; are their Plagues, are their very punishments are turned into sin: every thing that befalls them, heightens and hardens them in their wickedness, and ripens them for vengeance. God is not with them, and therefore nothing prospers with them. God is with his Saints, and therefore nothing comes amiss to them, but all for their greater advantage: Christians, this is your *portion*, and your *peculiar*, wherein the men of this world shall neither partake with you, nor ever be able to deprive you of it.

4. How all things shall work for their good, in spe-

dial, how shall the *evil things*, the sufferings of this Life be for their good? how can this be? must we disbelieve our Senses, lay down our Reasons, ere we can believe the Scriptures? Must we call evil good, & good evil? Must we count darkness light, and light darkness? Is pleasure pain, and pain pleasure? Is loss gain, and gain loss? Is ease torment, and torment ease? Doth Religion make things cease to be what they are, and to be what they are not? or at least, Must we believe that Darkness is the *Mother* of light, that Good is the *Daughter* of evil? Can we gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Can darkness give light, or death it self bring forth life? Must we say that contraries no longer destroy, but produce each other; and that the womb brings forth its own destruction? How can these things be?

But must God give a reason of his actions, or else they are not? though evil cannot bring forth good, darkness cannot bring forth light, yet, cannot God bring forth good out of evil, light out of darkness? Though darkness cannot bring forth light, evil cannot bring forth good by a natural causation, yet, cannot God make evil an occasion of good? Though it do not work *efficiently*, yet can it not work *objectively* neither to it? Though the torment the medicine puts men to be not ease, yet, may it not work toward ease? May not the storm, though it help not, yet hasten the Labourer on his work, the Traveller on his way? May not the darkness of the night make us more diligent in the day? May not sickness teach men more temperance, and poverty more frugality?

But to proceed more distinctly, *How can the Saints evil things work to their good?* That they do so, cannot be denied, unless we will deny not only Scripture, but common sense and experience: but how comes it to pass? I answer, in four particulars,

I. The

2. The afflictions and tribulations of the Saints, are the way that leads them on to the possession of that good which God hath intended to them; afflictions are the way of the Kingdom; the cross is the way to the Crown, *Act. 14. 22. Through many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of God. Pl. 66. 11, 12. Thou broughtest us into the Net, thou hast laid affliction upon our loins, thou hast caused men to ride over our heads: we went through fire and water, thou broughtest us into a wealthy place.*

Observe it, Their troubles are their way to their triumph; their very falling into the Net, their way to escape. Their Enemies boast, Escape! Arise! yes, let them free themselves with such hopes while they will, we have them sure enough, we have them under foot, we have them in the Net. If this be their way, we'll keep them in their way long enough; now we have them down; they shall not be able to rise. I, but yet it appears though all this the Lord led them forth into a wealthy place. The high-way of the proud is not their more ready way to the dust, than the dust of Saints is their sure way to honour. When *Israel* were to go to *Canaan*, they must take the Brick-kilns, the Red Sea, the Wilderness, *Jordan* in their way: Could any one have imagined that the bondage, the straits they were under, the doubling their tasks, the cruelty of their Task-masters, their enclosures at the Red Sea, did mean any good to them; yet, how fell it out at last their darkest dispensations had light in their latter end; their greatest bondage leads on to their greatest liberty.

Every cross providence is a step to the accomplishment of the promise, the wheel is ever moving on to its end; it moves still forwards, even when it seems to go quite backwards: as the River by its many turnings and windings forwards and backwards, is still in

Motion to the Sea, when it seems to be running quite contrary,

Christians, if ever the salvation of God seems to be removed farther off from you ; if the work of God should at any time seem to go backwards ; if cross winds should turn the whole course, so that you appear rather to be marching back into *Egypt*, than on to *Canaan*; yet be not discouraged, though your way be an unlikely & unpromising way, though you be led about forwards and backwards, yet still you are making on : though the lesser wheels, be never so cross & contrary in their motions, yet the great wheel is still moving right on to your blessed and hoped end. God intends your good, your spiritual good here, your eternal good hereafter : and believe it now, for he will let you see it hereafter, that those very things which most threaten your miscarriage, and a total abortion of your hopes, are made all to concur to the bringing them about, and to your more full and speedy possession of them.

Note farther here two things :

1. All things work ; not they shall work *de futuro*, but *de presenti*, they do work ; as the Apostle says, *The Mystery of iniquity* ; so we may say, *The Mystery of the Saints redemption doth already work*; the work is already on the wheel, and every wheel is in its motion for you; not only your *Brethren the Saints and Angels*, who are all praying for your peace, and seeking your good; but your *Enemies* also, the *Dragon*, with all his *Armies* are at work for you; all the *Councils* of this world are already sitting upon the very *matter* : God hath called them together for this purpose, the *Pope*, with all his *Conclave* ; the *Jesuits*, *Priests*, *Monks*, and *Friers*, with all their *Convents* ; yea, the *Devil*, with all his *Conclave of Hell*, are all at work for the good of *Saints*. It's true, they mean not, nor intend any such thing,

thing, their designs are against you; they count they are working for themselves; as 'tis said concerning the *Assyrian*, *Isa. 10. 6, 7.* God sent him forth upon a design of his own, to execute his council in the punishing of *Hypocrites*, to purge out the chaff from the wheat; *nevertheless he meaneth not so, nor doth his heart think so:* the *Assyrian* minds not what Gods design is, but follows his own design, fights for himself, and spoils for himself, but Gods design is still carried on by him, though he think not of it.

All the *Events* in the world are driving the same way; every disease or infirmity that comes upon you, every loss that you sustain, every scoff or reproach that you suffer; the shame in your faces, the sorrow of your hearts, the torment in your bowels, the aches in your bones, are all working your good. *All the changes* of your conditions, your fair weather and your foul, your Sunshine and your clouds, your plenty and your wants, your eases and your pains, your liberties and your Pains, are all making for you, your good is already working by all these things.

See Christians, what an harvest of blessedness is growing up to you, out of this *Promise*; the *Seed* is already sowing, your good is already working; God is at work, the whole Creation is at work, Men and Angels, good men and evil men, friends and enemies, heaven, and earth, and Hell, are already engaged to work your good.

2. They work together, that is as some understand it, they work together with God; all the second causes work together with the first cause, or as others, they work together among themselves. There is such a concatenation and concentrating of all these second causes in the same design, that however they seem to thwart and cross, and destroy some of them, what the others build and advance, yet they are all united in their end

they jointly contribute to the weal of the *Saints*.

Though, if I mistake not, this latter be the more sense of the two, yet I know no reason why both may not be understood. In the hand, and under the conduction of *Providence*, all these lower things concur and co-operate in the good of the Church.

By the way, observe what an harmony there is in all the works of *Providence*: The most cross and thwarting *Occurrences* do all conspire and go hand in hand to bring about the same end. As the differing vertues of various drugs do all concur to make up the medicine: As the differing sound of several strings or instruments do altogether make up the melody; As the differing colours in a picture; the dark as well as the brighter, do jointly contribute to the beauty of the piece; no less do the most contrary and contradictory actions and events, both make up the beauty of *Providence*, and jointly subserve that one end, to which, by an unseen hand, and an all-seeing eye, they are directed and intended.

2. The *evil things* that befall the *Saints*, come upon them to keep out worse things. Wherever the cross comes, if it had not come, something worse might: The *Cross* may be a means to secure from the *Curse*: The *Curse* was slain on the *Cross* of *Christ*; and our *Cross* also hath its use to the delivering us from it. *1 Cor. 11. 32. We are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world; Periissem nisi periissem*: I had died if I had not suffered; 'Tis more mens cases besides his that spake it; 'tis no bad exchange, to have a *Cross* instead of a *Curse*.

3. The *evil things* of the *Saints*, prepare them for better things: that they may work good for them; they are working them to good; working out their sin and iniquity, wearying them of sin, *Hos. 2. 6. I will hedge up*
her

*her way with thorns; then shall she say, I will return: Sin brought in afflictions into the world, & afflictions help to carry sin out; the Cross to which sin was once nail'd, is now nail'd to sin: the Saints can seldom be meddling with sin, but they find it too heavy for them; the Cross that is nail'd at the farther end of it, makes it a burthen which they cannot bear. In some sense, not only the blood of the Lamb, but the blood of the Sheep may purge away sin: though only the *πρότερον αἷμα* & *εὐσεβία* can expiate and take away the guilt, yet the *ὕστερον αἷμα* may have their place in purging away the filth of sin: By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin. Our Lord beats the Devil with his own weapons, by those very means, purging his Saints, by which he endeavours to pollute them, making those very persecutions, by which he labours to force them from holiness, to fix them in it; a fawning World does them more mischief than a fuming Devil. By that the Devil hath cast up his Cards, he will find himself a loser by all his rage.*

Christians, comfort your hearts; those floods that are cast forth against you, shall but wash you the whiter, and make you more meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light: your Purgatory prepares you for your Paradise, no unclean thing must enter in thither: and you are not like to be made so clean, as by falling into the hands of the unclean. The Saints never look so well, like sheep come from the washing, as when they come up from the Pots; their very black makes them comely.

Oh Christians, what a comfort would it be, if your Experiences might come in and seal to this Truth: If you could say, Thus it hath been with me; *Before I was afflicted I went astray, I was proud, and vain, and wanton, and slothful, and carnal, but now I have kept thy Word.*

Sin-

Sinners, whatever your mind be in persecuting the Saints, never think to debauch them by it; if that be your aim, you mistake your course; the living spark which God hath kindled in them, will not be blown out, but be blown up by your puffing at it; the dirt you cast upon them, doth but scour them the brighter: You take the best course you can to keep them closer to the Lord, and his way: The warm Sun will more hazard the loss of their garments, than the blustering wind. Let them alone, the Spirit of the Lord within them will be too hard for Hell, with all its black Regiments; and will not only secure them, but advance them yet higher by all their assaults. These Stars shine the brightest, when the Night is darkest; when you have done your worst 'twill be the better with them; though they will not thank you, yet they will thank God for what they have suffer'd by you. If this be your aim, to make them like your selves, you may set your hearts at rest and give over such a vain attempt: Your fury is like to do as little to force them, as your vertues are to invite them to a compliance with you. Your faces are too foul to draw them into your love, and yet not fierce enough to drive them into your fear. Satan, try thy utmost strength and skill, and if thou lovest not by thine own play at last, if thou findest not the poor people of God gotten nearer Heaven by thy attempts of plucking them down to Hell, then let thy Lies be believed, before the everlasting Gospel.

Christians, make me not ashamed in this same confident boasting of you: yea, contradict not your God, by suffering your selves to be corrupted by evil men. The Lord himself hath adventured deep upon your integrity and stedfastness: The honour of his Truth and Faithfulness lies at stake, he hath said, *They shall not be afraid of any evil tidings, their heart is fixed, trusting in the*

the Lord. Psal. 11. 7. He hath said, *By this shall their iniquity be purged, and this shall be all the fruit, to take away their sin.* God hath said, *all things shall work together for good to them.* They shall not be the worse, but the better, for all that befalls them: They shall love me, and my holy ways the more, they shall cleave unto me the closer, they shall be made more Pure, and more tender, by all they suffer for Righteousness sake; they shall love Conscience, and their integrity, and Faithfulness to it never the worse, for that it hath cost them so dear; but shall prize it the more, and be the more wary and tender how they pollute and turn aside from it. God hath adventured deep on you, make not him a Lyar; the Devil and his Instruments will be ready to say concerning you, as once he did to the Lord concerning his servant Job; *put them into our power, let us have the handling of them a while, and thou shalt quickly see what truth there is in them or what trust there is to them; they'll curse thee to thy face they'll deny thee to thy face, they'll eat their own words, they'll be ashamed of their God, their Godliness and Confidence.* Let God be true, Christians, and the Devil a Lyar; believing *Commentaries* on this *Blessed Text*: Let the world and their black Prince see, that they cannot make you miserable, because they cannot make you sinners like themselves: That you are still the more upright for falling into the hands of a crooked generation: Let them see, that though your God will not suffer you, yet you are contented to serve him for nothing. That though his hedge be removed from you, yet your heart is not removed from him: Be able to say, *Though all this be come upon us, our heart is not turned back, neither have we declined thy way.*

Let our standing and increasing in the grace of God, and abounding in the works of righteousness, be

a Standing Witness for God in the World, and a seal to his Scriptures, and in special to the glorious Truth of this Text.

4. *The evil things of the Saints, prepare better things for them, their sufferings go into their reward : As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ : Every suffering comes with a comfort in its belly, and the sweet is so great, as swallows up the bitter; tis a hundred fold that the Saints gain by all their losses in this life, but how great shall their reward be in heaven, 2 Cor. 4. 17. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory. They shall not only have weight for weight, measure for measure, their load of glory for their load of sufferings, but they shall have over-weight, over-measure, good measure, pressed down, heaped together, and running over, shall then be given unto them : according to their deep poverty, shall be the height of their riches; according as their blackness hath been in their houses of bondage, shall be their brightness in the Land of promise ; for all thy shame thou shalt have double : The double of thy reproach in renown, the double of thy tears in triumphs, all thy bottled tears shall be returned in Flagons of joy, yea, in Rivers of eternal pleasure.*

By this time, Christians, you see what glory there is in this good word : *All things shall work together for good to them that love God.* And that none may have the face to say, all this is but conceit, I shall, in the next place, bring in clear and undeniable evidence, that it is certainly and unquestionably so as hath been said : And therefore know,

5. That all things do, and shall certainly work for good to them that love God. This (besides the testimony of this Scripture) I shall make evident from these three Propositions.

1. There

1. There is a *divine providence* that governs the world
2. The design of *Providence*, is the accomplishment of the good purpose and promise of God.
3. The *Providence* of God shall never fail of accomplishing its end.

1. There is a *divine Providence* which governs the World: the *Epicureans*, who deny *Providence*, and leave all on *Chance* and *Fortune*, may as well deny that there is a God, which yet they are ashamed to stand to. Of *Epicurus* himself it was said, *Quem nihil pudendum pudet, pudet tamen Deum negare.*

It can be no way reconcileable to the infinite wisdom of God, who made this glorious Fabrick, with the various Creatures therein, either not to determine them to their ends, or else to take no care for their accomplishing those ends they are determined to. The whole current of Scripture is so plain in these matters, that he that runs may read: Let the following Scriptures, amongst others, be considered.

Psal. 97. 1. The Lord reigneth, let the Earth rejoyce, let the Isles be glad. Psal. 67. 15, 16. The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season: Thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desires of every living thing. Psal. 36. 6. Thou preservest man and beast. Psal. 75. 6, 7. Promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South; but God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another. Amos. 3. 6. Shall there be evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it? Psal. 17. 13, 14. Deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy Sword; from men, which are thy hand. The confessions of those Infidels, Nebuchadnezzar and Darius, speak the same, Dan. 4. 35. All the Inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and he doth according to his will, in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the earth, and
none

none can stay his hand, and say unto him, What dost thou? Dan. 6. 26. I make a Decree, that in every Dominion of my Kingdom men tremble, and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, and steadfast for ever; and his Kingdom that, which shall not be destroyed; and his Dominions shall be even unto the end; he delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in Heaven and earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the Lyons.

But more distinctly, the Lord governs all inanimate and sensitive Creatures in their actions; he orders the Stars in their courses. The Stars in their courses, he made to fight against Siferath: he governs the winds and the floods; he bringeth forth the winds out of his treasures, he rides upon the wings of the wind, he maketh the clouds his Chariots, he sitteth on the floods, the Thunder and the Hail, and the Rain, and the Frost, are all at his command; he giveth Snow like Wool, and scattereth the hoary Frost like ashes: he casteth forth the Ice like morsels, he sets bounds to the Sea, which it shall not pass; The birds of the Air, the Beasts of the Field, the Fishes of the Sea, yea the Stones and dust of the earth, are all at his beck.

More especially, he rules and governs the men of this world. He sits in all the counsels of men, though they see him not, he orders all their Decrees, there's no Decree can pass, unless God gives his vote. He rules in all the changes that are in the world, he changes the time and the seasons, he changes Kingdoms, and Governments; he removeth Kings, and setteth up Kings; he makes War, and creates Peace; he bendeth the bowe, and he breaketh the bowe; and curteth the Spear in sunder, and burneth the Chariots in the fire: Peace and War, Health and Sickness, Plenty and Famine, Life and Death, are all the disposures of his hand, He orders all
the

the *events and casualties* of the world, even from the greatest to the smallest. Without him, nor a Sparrow shall fall, nor a hair of the head shall perish; though there be so men, yet to the Lord there are no casualties or contingencies: but all things come to pass according as his hand and counsel had before determined.

2. The design of Providence (as it respects the Elect) is the accomplishment of Gods good purpose and promise. Providence governs the World, and the purpose and promise governs Providence. All the works of Providence have *rationem mediorum ad finem*. God doth nothing in vain: it is not consistent with the wisdom of God, to do any thing for nothing. God would have his people look farther than the things that are before them, because all those things have a farther aspect themselves. All the works of Providence have a double aspect, they look backward to the purpose and promise; and they look forward to the end for which they are: As they look backward, so they have truth in them, exactly answering the purpose and promise from which they have their birth. As they look forward to their end, so they have good in them; and that good (their subservience to the end) is the reason of their being. Here note two things.

1. That the subserviency of things to their end, is the goodness of them; if the end be good, the means must (as such) be good also: If what God hath purposed and promised be good, then all things that fall in between, having the respect of means to their accomplishment, must upon that account be good. If our crosses and afflictions do subserve the bringing about of Gods good will and Good word, we must say concerning them, *Good are the works of the Lord*. It is not how any thing looks or feels at present, but what it means, and to what it tends. If the potion be bitter,

and

and yet it tends to health; if the Messenger be ill-look-
ed, and ill-favoured, and yet comes upon a good errand,
you may bid him welcome. And thus all the Provi-
dences of God are good. If you should ask of any Pro-
vidence, wherefore art thou come? *Comest thou Peace-
ably*, comest thou for good: they must all answer, *yes,
peaceably* for good, and no hurr. 'Tis but to help all
that good into thy hand, which hath been in the heart,
and hath proceeded out of the mouth of thy God that
loves thee. There is not a *Messenger of Satan* that
comes to buffet thee, but is also a *Messenger from God*,
that comes to thee for good. The very thorns in thy
flesh shall serve thee for plaisters, thine eye-sores shall
be thine eye-salve, & thy very maladies thy medicines.

2. That this Relative goodness of all the works of
Providence, is the reason of their being. Therefore
God doth what he doth, that hereby he may do what
he hath said and intended. I do not say, that the reason
of Gods taking this or that means, is always from any
thing in it self, or for his natural tendency to such an
end above any thing else; God hath his choice of
means, he can choose here or there at pleasure, can make
use of what he will to serve his design, but the reason
why things are, is this, God in his wisdom saw their *or-
dinability* to this good end, and thereupon in his Pro-
vidence he orders and brings them to pass.

So that now, whatever befalls a Christian, he hath
this to allay and take off the grievousness and sharp-
ness of it: This had never been, but for the good will,
and good word of the Lord to me. The Lord God hath
said he will bless me, and do me good; he will heal me,
and sanctifie, and save me, and now he is about it; by
this, he is working that salvation for me:

Christians, you have no reason to say. If the Lord
be with me, why am I thus, who so poor, why so pain-
ed,

ed, why so persecuted, so scorned and trampled upon? sure if the Lord had meant my good, 'twould have been better than 'tis with me. No, no, 'tis because the Lord is with thee, and means thee well, that he deals in this manner with thee. The design of his Providence towards thee, is the accomplishment of his promise.

3. The Providence of God shall never fail of accomplishing its end. There is nothing wanting that might give us the fullest assurance hereof. For,

1. The Providence of God hath power with it. He is the Almighty that hath promised, he that ruleth in the Earth, dwelleth in Heaven, and doth whatsoever he will. *Our God is in Heaven, and doth whatsoever he will. I will work, and who shall let it? Isa. 43.* Who can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou? were it not for our unbelief, our case would be still the same in greatest difficulties, as when the Coasts are most clear. We might say of difficulties, as the Psalmist of darkness, *There is no darkness with thee, to thee day and night are both alike.* Difficulties are no difficulties with thee, nor is there difference betwixt hard and ease. He can save with many or with few; and with none, is as well as with some. We once read he had too many, but never that he had too few to bring about his work. Oh how we do disparage the power of God, when our difficulties make us doubt! Is he God, and not man? Is he Spirit, and not flesh? Wherefore then dost thou doubt? Whatever God hath said, he can do: believe he is a God, and thou wilt never say, How can these things be?

2. The Providence of God hath wisdom with it: He is the only wise, he is the all-wise God, *He knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, 2 Pet. 2. 9.* He knoweth what is good for his Saints, & when 'twill be in season; he understandeth what is proper & pertinent to every case, what's proper to every purpose, to every

people, to every person, and for every season; he knows when 'tis a season to abase, and when to exalt; when to afflict, and when to deliver; when to put on the yoke, and when to take off the yoke; when to pull down, and when to build up; every thing is beautiful in its season. If mercies come *out of season*, mercies would be no mercies; and if troubles come *in their season*, troubles should be no troubles: he knows the best method and means to his end; the fittest means, he sees sometimes the unfittest to be the fittest; the most unlikely, unpromising means, do often best serve Gods end.

Christians, if you would receive every dispensation as coming from the hands of the wise God, you would never quarrel with your lot, nor say of any thing that befalls, I might be happy, but this stands in my way. If you would give God leave to be wiser than you, you would say where-ever you are, *Its good for me to be here*; this is my way to my rest.

3. The providence of God hath *faithfulness* with it, *Psal. 25. 10. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and [truth] to them that keep his Covenant, and his Testimonies. Psal. 111. 8. His works are done in truth.* Gods works may be said to be *done in truth*, in a double sense:

In Reality,

In Fidelity.

1. In *reality*, not in *specie*, or in shew only, but in deed. Gods comforts are comforts indeed; Gods salvation is salvation indeed. The Devil will come with his gifts, with his comforts and deliverances; but they are for the most part, but *spectra*, like himself, shews and apparitions, quite another thing than what they seem to be: sinners comforts, deliverances, enjoyments, where-with the Devil feeds them, do leave them in as poor a case, and worse than they found them: you will never thank the Devil for his kindness, when you have prov'd them

them what they are. If you do not find your selves as fast bound in the midst of all your liberties; if you be not wrapt up in as many sorrows, after all the joyes he hath procured to you; if the glittering glories, the glorying pleasures be entice you by, and entertains you with, be not trash and dirt, and meer lies in the end, then say, the Devil hath forgotten his Trade of lying: the Devils works will be even like himself, false and deceitful. But God is true, and all his works are done in truth.

2. In *Fidelity*; his works are according to his word, *1 King. 8:24. Thou hast spoken with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled with thine hand, and in thy faithfulness thou hast afflicted me, Psal. 119.* Not only in thy faithfulness thou hast saved me, in thy faithfulness thou hast comforted me, in thy faithfulness thou hast succoured me: but in thy faithfulness thou hast afflicted me, in thy faithfulness thou hast humbled & broken me, & cast me down. The promise of God is that we shall want nothing we shall neither want his Staff, nor his Rod; neither comforts, nor crosses; neither joyes, nor sorrows; we cannot well want either, and we shall want neither, because God is faithful. You may not only write down with the Apostle, *God is faithful, & will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able to bear;* but you may write also, *God is faithful and will not suffer you to want a temptation.* When 'tis seasonable, your hearts shall be glad; & if need be, for a season you shall be in heaviness. God is faithful, he will ever be true to himself, & therefore to you, *2 Tim. 2. 9. He abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself.* Should he be false to his people, he cannot be true to himself, to his purpose & promise; his word is not yea and nay. *God is not as man, that he should lye; or the son of man, that he should repent:* that he should say and unsay, that he should say, and not do; you may

write Gods Name upon every word he hath spoken; you may write his Name (*I am*) upon all that he hath said: It shall be.

Now Christians, put these three particulars together, and if you cannot spell out the conclusion of them, (*The Providence of God will certainly accomplish his good purpose and promise concerning you:*) you are of little understanding, as well as of little faith.

If God governs the World, and nothing comes to pass but by his providence; if Providence governs according to Gods purpose and promise; if Providence cannot fail of accomplishing both.

If God be *Almighty*, and can; if God be *wise*, and knows how; if God be *faithful* and true; let the Devil if he can, with all his Sophistry, evade the conclusion, *That he will certainly do all that good for you which he hath purposed and promised:* if God be not able to perform, he is not good; if he mistake his way, if he use impertinent, improper means, he is not the All-wise God. If he do not actually perform what he is able, and knows how to do, when he hath said it, he ceases to be the true God: So that the matter is brought plainly to this issue; if God be God, if God be the all-wise God, if God be the True and Faithful God, this word which he hath spoken (*All things shall work together for good to those that love God*) shall not fail of its accomplishment in its season.

Having thus proved the Doctrine, I shall, after I have added a few words by way of Caution, and answered an Objection or two against the sense I have given of this Promise, and subjoyned a few particular Inferences, descend to the general Application.

I. By way of Caution.

1. *Limit not the Lord to your time and way;* God will make good his Word, but you must give him leave to take

take his own season. *He that believeth, shall not make haste:* Beleive God, but do not prejudge nor precipitate, lest you fall into temptation. Put no more into the promise, neither for matter nor circumstance, than God hath put in it: put not that into the promise, which God hath not put in it, lest you miss and come short of that which God hath put in it. Let others mistakes and miscarriages be warnings to you: till God hath manifestly said, do not you say, *This is the time*; build not your confidence on conjectures, your faith on the strongest presumptions, lest your faith prove but a fanstie, and your confidence your confusion: make not the promise of God of none effect, by looking for its effect out of season. Beleive not your selves into infidelity: Consider, *Act. 1. 7. It is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which God hath put in his own power.* Study the Word and its Commentary, the Works of God, but be sober in your conclusions.

This you may safely depend upon, and this will be enough, if you have no more: God will make good his good word to you sooner or later, in one time or other, in one way or other; in the best time, in the best way, in the appointed time, the Vision shall speak, and not lye, *Habbak. 2. 3. Though it may tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, and will not tarry*: At least, at the end of the days, when you shall stand in your lot: when you shall be gotten on the banks of Canaan, and shall thence look back on the promises and providences of God, you shall see and say, God is faithful, there hath not failed one word of all that he hath promised: Now I understand, though once I could not, how every wheel was turning, every instrument was moving, every event was working toward my good, & everlasting welfare.

2. *Let not your expectation cause an abortion.* Let not your looking for mercy, hinder the working of your af-

affliction: It is not seldom, and the Lord grant it be not too common a case, that our door of hope becomes a door of sin. We do not set our selves with that seriousness, to humble, to purge our selves from our iniquities, as we would do, did we apprehend our case more desperate: our cares and our sorrows have not their kindly work upon us, our hope hinders it. We might have been more broken-hearted, had it not been for our hopes of building up: as it is with a person who conceives himself to be dying, he then falls to praying and repenting, and setting his heart in order, because he must die: but upon a little hope of recovery, he lays by his dying thoughts and preparations.

Christians, Whenever you are under afflictions, take heed that your expectation of deliverance to be near, put it not so much the farther off. Watch narrowly over your selves, & look diligently to it, that your hope of Redemption do not harden your hearts, nor hinder your humiliation & repentance. Hope in *God*, and wait for the promise of his coming; but know, that till the rod hath done its work, it is not like in mercy to be laid by; and it's better to be continued in the Furnace, than to be brought forth with your dross unpurged away.

Against this blessed truth there are some objections: as,

Object. 1. *Can it ever be said, that the removal of the Gospel, and the preaching of it, can be for good?*

Sol. This is an hard truth, but yet a truth, that even this shall work for good to those that love *God*.

1. It's true, that the removal of the Gospel, and the Ministry of it, is a most grievous judgment: and that which carries with it a greater evidence of wrath, and divine displeasure against a people, than any thing that ever befalls them in this world. How great a judgment it is, we may guess, if we observe those Scripture-expressions

pressions by which its set forth: Its called the *famine of the Word*, Amos 8. 11. *The glory departed*, 1 Sam. 4. *The Kingdom of Heaven taken away*, Mat. 6. 41. *The Salvation of God sent away*, Act. 28. and can there any thing worse befall a People? a Soul-famine, an Eclipse of their spiritual glory, the shutting up of the Kingdom of Heaven, the carrying away of the salvation of God. What worse thing can come unto them? Its a great wonder there should be no deeper sense of this most dreadful of evils than is mostly found: Men little understand what they *do*, who either in a way of *merit*, or *instrumentally*, procure, and bring on this plague; and few understand, or are sensible what they herein *suffer*; to be an *instrument* in this hellish work, is an office for a *Devil*; and the *suffering* of such a plague (to them that understand it) is an *Hell above ground*. This darkness is the very same for kind, with the darkness of Hell; as the light of the Gospel is the same in kind with the everlasting light, as glory under age, so is this thick darkness, *in specie*, and *in semine*, the darkness of the pit. Oh, what an Hell of wickedness doth this World then become! the Devil is then in his Region, is let loose, rules the world at pleasure, deceives, devours, destroys souls without contradiction; takes them captive at his will, carries them down by whole shoals to destruction: Those that observe what a World there is, where the Gospel is not; what Oaths, Curses, Blasphemies, belluine Lusts then abound; what Lyons, Tygers, wild Bulls, wild Boars, Men then become one to another, need not be to seek for an Argument to prove there is an Hell, they see an Hell above ground.

These dark and dismal seasons are the Devils *Marts*, where he may vent his hellish wares, his snares & temptations, his deceits, and delusions, & every abominable thing by *whole sale*, there's nothing so false, so vile and

abominable, but he can put it off at pleasure; Adultery, Drunkenness, Witchcraft, Sodomy, Buggery, Blasphemy, Idolatry, Atheism, any thing that Satan hath to offer, he'll find Customers enough to receive: and the truth is, the *Devil* may spare his pains; men need not then a *Devil* to damn them, they'll do it fast enough of their own accords.

Oh, 'twere happy if *Saints* were so busie in improving their light, to hasten them Heaven-wards, as sinners do their darkness to hurry them to Hell! O the sad proofs that the world affords of this dreadful Truth! Look into all the dark corners of the Earth, especially there where there hath been light, and see if you find not all this fully proved to your hand. Can he then be accounted a Christian, whose heart doth not tremble at the thoughts and the fears of such a sore judgment? he is both dark and dead indeed, to whom such a mist is not as the first-born of Death, or the King of Terrors.

Christians, If ever this should be your case, make not light of it; and take heed, how sad soever it may seem in its first approach, that no tract of time do wear off the sense of it.

Those that are weary of the Gospel, that cry out of too much preaching, that are sick of the light that shines unto them, you may know by what hath been said, what judgment to have of them.

But is it not strange that there should be any such? That those that have lived in the light, and seen something, what difference there is between light and darkness, should yet love darkness rather than light? Is it not yet more strange, that any that pretend to be set up for lights, should be for darkness? That the *Prophets* should be against prophesying? That the *Pulpits* should ring against preaching? Some there are, that are not ashamed to tell us, that hence come all our mischiefs and

miserics; to tell us, and to stand to it, that there's now in such a Land as this, little need of *preaching*; that it had its use in the first publishing & planting of the Gospel; but now that the Gospel is received and embraced, & competently understood, there's now little more need of *Preaching, Praying* and *Reading* may now serve the turn. I would put in a word or two to such:

No need of *Preaching*! Why? Is the end of *Preaching* accomplished? Till the end be attained, there's still need that the means be continued: And what was the end of *preaching*? Was it mens *instruction* only, to bring them to the knowledge of Christ, to turn them from darkness to light? Was it not for their *Conversion* also, to turn them from the power of Satan unto God? Yea, and their *Edification*, & building up in holiness to salvation? let these following Scriptures be consulted, *Act. 26. 18. Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13. The Apostle Peter, 2. Pet. 1. 12. 13.* told those Christians to whom he wrote, that he would, he thought it meet so to do, to put them in remembrance, as long as he lived, and to stir them up to their duty; though sayes he, *You know, and be established in the present truth.* You say, you need no more *preaching*, the *Preacher* can tell you no more than you know already, and might not these have better said it, when the Apostle acknowledgeth of them, that they did know, and more then that, were established in those very Truths, he meant to continue preaching to them? And yet he tells them, its meet they be still put in remembrance of them: Sure *Peters Authority* weighs not so much with these men, as his that pretends to sit in *Peters chair*: But hath the Gospel indeed done its work and reached its end? Witness the *Objectors* own cases. Let not only their *lewdness* and *impenitency*, but their *ignorance* and *unbelief*, come in and testify, whether it hath or no. They that have most need themselves, are they

they that say, *There's no more need of preaching.* There needs no more Argument to stop such mouths, but the shewing themselves: or if it should have done its work upon you, yet hath it done its work upon all? Are there no Unbelievers left? Have all men faith? *Faith comes by hearing, and how shall they hear without a Preacher?* If you say, they have *Bibles* to instruct them, and their own *Consciences* to preach to them, I answer:

First, for their *Bibles*, two things.

1. Those that are no friends to the Pulpit, are none of the best friends to the Bible: those that would not that the people should hear, care not how little they read the Scriptures: And be sure, when ever Preaching is let fall, the Bible will in a little while be laid aside.

2. Understandest thou what thou readest? How canst thou without a guide? He knows but little of the Scriptures, that doth not understand that they are hard to be understood. There are, the Apostle tell us, *δυσνόητα* in the Scriptures, things hard to be understood: as there are many *δυσνόητα* to all that read, so to many that read all are so. The Vulgar can as well read the Scriptures without their own eyes, as understand them without the Preachers lips. Till we come to hold, that *Ignorance is the mother of Devotion*; or that *Images are Lay-mens Gospel*; till then let it be granted as necessary, that the Preachers lips preserve knowledge.

Secondly, For *Conscience*: Let the Word at least be preached so long, till it be made manifest in the *Consciences* of all the Hearers: that *Conscience* that hath not been sufficiently preached to, will prove an insufficient preacher. Let preaching be continued till the Word be manifested in the *Consciences* of all the Hearers; and if you will needs have it so, then let it be forborn.

2. Hath the Devil yet given over preaching? and are the preachers yet silent? Hath the Devil yet given over his

his preaching, his deceiving souls, his perverting the good ways of the Lord, and discouraging Persons from walking in them? Sure there's need that Christ be preached, while there is a Devil that impeaches him. Hath the Devil them that preach him every day, & must not Christ have them that preach him, at least every Sabbath day? May *once a month, or once a Quarter* be enough for these, when every day, and all the day long, does scarce suffice for those? When, or where are evil men silent? Are they not preaching daily, in the House, in the Streets, in the Taverns, on the Stage, in the Stews? Preaching by their Oaths, their Curses, by their Lies, by their Scoffs, by their Habits, by their Cups, by their Whores, and almost by all their words and works; And is there no need that Christ be any longer preached any where, when the Devil is preached every where? If in such a case the *Preachers* of Christ should altogether hold their peace, might we not expect that the very stones would cry out? This is but a reasonable demand. Let Faith & Holiness, first, have none found that preach against them, before those that preach them, be concluded such as may well be spared. But what need we reason any longer in a case so plain, wherein I can have no adversaries but such as the Apostle had, when he fought with Beasts at *Ephesus*. Whosoever is an adversary to preaching, is either an Infidel or a Brute. I shall only leave one word for such to chew upon, & so leave them and their cause to the judgment of God, *Act. 13 46: It was necessary, that the Word of God should have bin first spoken to you; but because you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting Life, Lo we turn unto the Gentiles!* Let all back-friends to preaching pause sadly upon that word; you have prevented the judgment of God, by putting the word from you, you have given your selves your own Sentence, you have judged your selves

selves unworthy of everlasting life. Well, by what hath been said, notwithstanding all that can be said against it, it appears, That the removal of the Gospel, and the preaching of it, is a grievous judgment,

2. This grievous judgment shall yet work to the good of *Saints*: That which comes in wrath on some, may be in mercy to others: 'Tis the ignorant, the unconverted, the unbelieving part of men, on whom the vengeance of this judgment falls: 'Tis those that are weary of the Word, that can worse it. Sinners, you that say to the *Seers*, see not; to the *Prophets*, prophesie no more to us; let us alone, we have enough of this preaching: If God once say as you say, *Let it be according to their Word*, 'tis your souls are like to go for it: And tis not the least aggravation of the sorrows of the *Saints*, the misery they see hereby coming on you: As for themselves (that I may answer more distinctly)

1. The Gospel shall never be totally removed from them; they shall never see dayes of Famine: If they never again hear the joyful sound from without, they shall have it within. The word which they have received, shall be in them a Well of water springing up unto eternal life: if the Shows and the Rain fail, yet the Spring which is within them, shall supply that want: If they have no Bible in the house, no preaching in the Pulpit, yet they have a Bible in their hearts, a Preacher in their breasts, that shall instruct and comfort them. *Pharaoh's dream*, and the interpretation of it, shall be to the *Egyptians*, and not to *Israel*. The lean Kine shall not devour the fat ones; there is a *Store-house*, from whence they shall be supplied.

What ever scarcity there be, this is certain, not one of them shall want a *viaticum* to bring them to their journey's end. God will not suffer one of his Elect to starve or perish in the way: There shall not fail means of one kind

kind or another, till the whole body be perfected and built up: Till *(we all)* come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

2. That *Scarcity* that does at any time befall them, shall happen to them for the better, and not for the worse.

1. For who knows, whenever the Ministry is removed, but it may be in order to a greater glory at its return? perhaps Gods sending away Pastors from a people, may be as *Pauls* absence from the *Romans*, that they may return in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel: Or as *Onesimus* his departing from *Philemon*: Perhaps they therefore depart for a season, that they may be received for ever: Or, if this should not be the case of any particular Church, if they should return no more; yet,

2. Their want of means, shall supply their want of means; their want of means shall be their means: When they have no *Preacher*, their empty Pulpits shall preach to them; this most smarting of rods will have its voice. If they have no longer the light with them, their darkness shall instruct them; if they want their *[burning]* Lights, the very cold shall preserve and increase their inward vigour; the wickedness of others shall make them more holy; the violence of evil men upon sin, shall enkindle their zeal for God; the darkness that's here below, shall make them to live more above, & all this shall make to their fuller reward. 'Tis a greater virtue to keep up the heart, to keep on our way, where there is a want, than where there are abundance of means & helps; & an higher virtue, shall have a greater reward.

3. The failing of the word, will bring back to their memories, and upon their own hearts, that which they have received; and as the emptiness of the stomach will cause a second & better concoction, & turn it into better nourishment; when there are no more loaves, they'll gather

gather up the fragments that nothing be lost; the less there is, more to be had; the more reckoning, and the better use they will make of what they have; their present want will be a rebuke of their former wantonness, their want of Remembrancers, will help their memories, and whet their appetites. Every old truth that hath been too much laid by, will then be precious.

4. Whenever ordinary means fail, God will either find extraordinary, or else will feed them more immediately from himself. *Psal. 34. 9.* God hath promised, that *those that fear the Lord shall want no good thing.* If that be meant of temporal good things, yet sure it will yeild us an argument that will reach the present case. If God will provide for their Carkasses much more for their Souls. If God will supply them with less necessities, then doubtless he will not be wanting in what's absolutely necessary, *Psal. 23. 1, 2, 3.* *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want,* and so on throughout the whole Psalm: *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the dayes of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*

Here we have the *Psalmist's* conclusion, and its foundation; or his confidence, and its ground: his foundation or ground is, *The Lord is my Shepherd*; his conclusion or confidence is, *I shall not want*; that is, neither for body nor soul, as appears by the following part of the *Psalms*. If *David's* Logick and his faith too, does not fail him, the conclusion is firm; let the Lord be his Shepherd, & he shall not know famine or want.

Gods relation to his people, is their security for a sufficient provision in all times. If the Lord be their Shepherd, he must see them fed; he must either find them those that shall, or do it himself. He must either find them pastors, or be their pastors; he must either provide for them, or be their pasture. If ordinary means fail,

he

he must find extraordinary ; if both fail, he must be instead of means to them. Hear two things :

1. That God stands engaged, as the Shepherd of his people, where ordinary means fail, either to provide them extraordinary, or to feed them more immediately from himself.

2. That extraordinary means, or no means, when God brings his people to it, will be better than their ordinary means.

1. That God stands engaged as the Shepherd of his people, where ordinary means fail, either to provide them extraordinary, or to feed them more immediately from himself. Feed them he must, or he cannot be faithful, and if means fail, he must supply that want one way or other. Now God is faithful and will not see his sheep to starve, *Isa. 41. 17, 18. When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them, I will open Rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the Vallies; I will make the Wilderness a pool of water, and the dry Land springs of water.* Oh what a good World is here for the poor Saints to live upon in hard times! It is interpreted to have an immediate reference to the outward, and yet a special respect also to the spiritual wants and distresses. And it will appear, if we compare it with the like expressions, *Chap. 44. 3. I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground, I will pour my Spirit on thy seed, and my blessing upon thy off-spring.*

From the former Scriptures note,

1. That the poor people of God may sometimes be (as to the visible soul-provisions) but in a poor case, needy, & hungry and thirsty, their hearts fainting, their tongues failing for thirst, and their waters dried up [If they seek water, and there be none.]

2. All

2. All the wants and straits of the Saints, are before the Lord. [I the Lord will hear.] Christians, though those that should, will not, yet he that can, will hear the cries of your souls; all your faintings and pantings, and longings for the water of life, are before your eyes, and come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabbath.

3. God hath more ways then one to relieve the wants, and refresh the bowels of his hungry ones. He hath extraordinary means for extraordinary cases. If they can find no common Rivers, he will open, or make new Rivers. The high places, the dry places, the very Rock will yeild a River, when God commands it.

4. Gods extraordinary provisions shall not be scanty and penurious, but rich & plentiful. Tis not *some drops* or now and then a *draught*, a little to stay the longing, or barley enough to keep them alive; he prepares them Rivers, Fountains, Pools, Springs of water (I will open Rivers in the high places, Fountains in the Vallies, &c.) Where-ever they be cast, in the high places, in the Vallies, in the Wilderness, in the dry Lands, wherever they be cast, I will cause provision enough to meet them; though they have neither bag nor bottle, nor any thing to carry with them, they shall not want; the river shall meet them, Springs shall arise & break forth to them.

5. They are not the wanting, but the thirsting, the seeking souls, whom God will supply. When the poor and needy [seek] water, and there is none. Oh *Christians*! How many poor are there that sit down by their poverty; who if they starve, yet will not beg; their emptiness hath taken away their appetites. These are sad souls; 'tis a sad sight to behold a company of hunger-bitten souls sit weeping and sighing, seeking after the bread and water of Life, and finding none; but to see empty, and yet not hungry; fainting, and yet not panting souls; to see souls even dying away for want, and yet

yet not desiring or craving a supply, this is a much sorer spectacle. *Afterving, thirstless soul, is next to a Ghost.*

Well, if ever such souls find, who never seek water, 'tis more than God hath promised. 'Tis they that seek water, to whom God will open a River.

6. Whatever difficulty there be to furnish the hungry Saints, with a sufficiency of provision, yet one way or other it shall be done. *I [the Lord] will hear. I [the God] of Israel will not forsake them. Upon me be all their wants. I am [God] and can, I am [their God] the God of Israel, and will provide for them.* They must and shall be provided for; whatever course I be put to take, I must not see them starve.

The Lord will not be wanting to them if his Word be not heard, his Works shall speake; if Preachers cannot, Providence shall preach to them; if their friends cannot, their Enemies, their Stripes, their Wounds, their Rods shall instruct them. *Thy rod and thy staff comfort me.* If they have no other, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, the Fowls of the Air, the Beasts of the field shall be their Prophets and Apostles. If all should fail, yet the Spirit of the Lord shall not fail to be their Teacher and Comforter.

2. Extraordinary means have more in them than ordinary, and no means more than means.

1. Extraordinary means, when ordinary cannot be had, are sweeter and better feeding for the Saints than ordinary would be. The less of the Creature, the more of God; the less of common Providence, the more of special grace. Water out of the Rock was more precious than out of the River; the Manna of the Wilderness, was (to them that understood it) better than the milk of Canaan. *Elijah* never made better meals, than what he got out of the Ravens mouth. I have heard of a Woman in great distress of soul, who received comfort when

the *Word* was brought her by the mouth of a child, which she had failed of receiving from the mouth of many excellent Ministers.

2. No means often prove better than means; when I say, no means, I do not understand simply none; means they shall have, of one kind or other; their understandings, their memories, their secret duties, Prayer, Meditation, &c. but by no means, I understand nothing from without, no Ordinances, Friends, Societies, Books, &c; Gods feeding of a soul more immediately, is much sweeter, than when he sends provision by the hand of another; the *Samaritans* hearing of Christs words from his own mouth, was much more to them than the same words reported by the Woman. *Dalcius ex ipso fonte*. Water is the purer, the nearer the Fountain; the bread that comes down from Heaven, is better bread than that which grows up out of the Earth, though that be originally from Heaven also. By how much the more immediately your comforts come from Heaven, by so much the more they have of Heaven in them. If upon thy failing of publick Communion, it be made up so much the more in secret, sure the Saints have no reason to complain. And whether this be not so, let the Prisons into which the Saints have been sometimes cast, the Wilderness into which they have been sometimes banished; let *Elihu's* songs in the night, *Peters, Pauls, Silas* songs in the Prison, in the Stocks, stand forth and testify. If Prison joyes, and Exile comforts, have not been often both fuller and sweeter to them, than when they have rolled in *Manna*, and lived in the fulness and freedom of all helps and means; then not a few Christians have either mistaken or misreported their experience. To pretend to live above Ordinances, whilst God affords them, is a wickedness that some men have to repent of; but where God denies them, he doth, he will provide a better substitute without them.

Now

Now lay all this together, and then you will see, that even this also, this most greivous of Judgments, the famine of the Word, whenever it befalls, shall work for good to those that love God.

Christians, cheer up your hearts; whatever droughe or dearth may fall upon the World, you are provided for, you shall have enough. If the shows fail without, you have within you that which shall spring up to eternal life. If your streams should be dried up, if your pastures should be trodden down, you have a God that will be both your Pastor and pasture. If the River fail you, the Rock shall supply you; what you want in ordinary, you may look to be made up in extraordinary means. The drying up of the waters, shall but drive you up to the Spring-head. If ever the Stars fail you, God shall but exchange *Star-light* for *Sun-light*; while there's light in the Sun, you shall not walk in darkness. See but to this, make sure that this God is yours, and he will find out a comfortable feeding for you; if you can but say *Davids* first words after him, *The Lord is my shepherd*: you may then with confidence say the whole Psalm after him, *I shall not want, he will make me to lie down in green pastures, he will lead me by the still waters; though I walk through the Valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, thy rod and thy staff shall comfort me, Thou shalt prepare me a Table in the presence of mine Enemies: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the dayes of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*

2. There is another Objection that seems to have one difficulty in it. Suppose a Saint to fall into *Distraction*, and thereby to be deprived utterly of the use of his Reason, and so live and die.

How can it be imagined, that this can work for his good; either in this world, or in the world to come? Can

any good arise out of an incapacity of any longer doing or receiving good, or patiently suffering evil? Can either his grace here, or his glory hereafter, be increased or advanced, by a mans being converted into a meer Brute?

1. There's no doubt at all, but this may make for the *Churches good*: Is there nothing that others may learn out of such a sad *providence*? If others may reap good by my evil, is it nothing to me? May it not be said to be good for any particular Saint, to bear the forest affliction by which the Church may have benefit? He hath not much of a Saint, to whom, if it were aforehand proposed, whether for the benefit of the Church, he would be content, if God see it good, to fall into such a calamity: He hath little of a Saint, that would deliberately refuse it. Doubtless a sincere Christian, who would count his usefulness to the good of the whole body, to be his good, would say even concerning such a *message*, were it brought to him, *Good is the word of the Lord*: And that which aforehand he would judge to be good for him to submit to, may it not be good for him to be under?

2. It may also be more directly for his particular *personal good*. For,

1. It may do him the same good which *Death* will do for him; concerning which the Apostle says, it is yours, *1 Cor. 3.* that is, it is for your advantage: it may take him from the evil to come; from those sorrows, and that trouble of heart which God might foresee falling upon him by any calamities, coming either on the Church in general, or himself, or family in particular: which being deprived of his reason, & power to reflect on, he cannot feel, or in the least be afflicted by. If you reply, *But the remedy is worse then the disease*: To be useless and un-serviceable, is less eligible, than to be sorrowful and afflicted: Will any man choose to fall into a *Lethargy*, or *Apooplexie*, because it will secure him from the torment of

of a *Fever*? If there be any weight in this *Reply*, I shall add a farther *Answer*; which, if I misjudge not, will cut of all *Replies*.

2. Who knows *what sins and temptations* he might have fallen into, and fallen by, had not the Lord by this means prevented it, he might possibly have been a backslider, have fallen into gross sin, by which he might have been a terrour to himself, and a scandal to the Gospel; and is it not good for him that this is prevented? Is not that *affliction* a *mercy* which secures from such *iniquity*?

Who can say it is not thus? that the Lord foresaw he would have fallen into sin, and for prevention, brought him into this affliction: Who can say, it is not thus? if none can, than this is no Objection: if you reply, you say, *it may be* this is the case; and I may as well say, *it may be not*: there might be no such thing, that God foresaw, as the reason of this *providence*. 'Tis but a *conjecture*, and an *uncertainty*, when you have made the most of it: Be it so, yet it will fully answer my end: I am now proving, *that all things work for good to the Saints*, that's sufficiently done already: But you are objecting against it; and till you prove your Objection, which you can never do, unless you prove, that this is not the case; you must give me leave again to tell you, your Objection comes to nothing.

And so at length you see this blessed, glorious, comfortable Truth stands its ground, and triumphs over whatever hath any shadow of contradiction to it.

By the way, learn hence two things:

1. Rejoyce in this *promise of God*: Hath the Lord put in thy name here? let thine heart say, *It is enough*. Be more joyful in this, that God hath thus undertaken the care of thee, than if God had wholly put thee to thine own hand, giving thee power to help, and liberty to choose for thy self. In what wilt thou rejoyce, if not

in this, that the whole Creation are engaged to do thee a kindness, to help thee into the possession of thy God? Thou mayest now, not only submit to, but thankfully embrace every *Providence*, knowing upon what errand it comes to thee, for good, and not for hurt. Thou mayest now triumph, not only in the *consternations*, but in the *triumphs* of thine Enemies, whether they ride over thy back, or thou tread on their neck, 'tis all one, the issue will be the same. Thy troubles and thy consolations differ only in their countenance; with what ever grim face thy afflictions look, there are smiles under: learn to see through them, and thou mayest see light on the further side. Beleeve this word, thou mayest read it written upon every thing that befalls thee: ther's no Messenger that comes, but brings this promise in his hand, *Even this shall work for good*. Read it, and rejoyce.

2. *Lay thy self down quietly under it*. No more perplexing or distracting cares, what shall become of thee, no more unwarrantable shifting for thy self: let God alone. Shift not for thy self, lest God leave thee to thine own shifts. Let not the violence of evil men disturb thy peace, or provoke thee to *unpeaceableness*, whatever provocations thou maist have, avenge not thy self, neither give place unto wrath, murmurings or fears. In thy patience possess thy soul, thy God, and his good Word: Thy strength is to sit still: Stand still and see the salvation of God: thou hast nothing to do but to be *Holy*, let that be thine only care; thy God will see to it, thou shalt be *happy*, he is faithful that hath promised. Love God, and leave thy self and thy whole interest in this blessed Word, *All things shall work to thee for good*.

By this time you see something of the Riches of this promise; God is in the promise, the God of peace, the God of power, the God of patience, the God of hope; the heart of God, the help of God, the presence of God;
and

by vertue whereof, all that ever befalls them shall work for their good. Methinks the hearing of this promise opened, should set your souls, and all that is within you a crying out, *Oh that this were my portion! Where-ever my lot do fall, as to outward things, though in a Prison, though in a Desert, though on a dunghil; let the lot of my soul lie in this Promise, The God of Peace shall be with you.* Why Brethren, will you take up with godliness: you have learned, and received, and heard the word of the Lord, the word of Faith, the word of Righteousness and Holiness; will you hearken to, will you obey these words? *These things do, and the God of peace shall be with you.*

Oh what foolish creatures are we, that ever we should be afraid of Religion, afraid of Holiness, afraid to own, obey, and follow God and his holy ways. What unreasonable fears are these, to those that beleive the Scriptures? If the Scriptures be true, this is the only way, this following God in holiness, to put your selves out of all danger, to put your selves into the heart, arms, presence, protection of the Almighty God of Heaven and Earth.

Oh that I could perswade you in thither, and there leave you; if you are once in the Lords arms, you are safe enough, into whatever hands you fall.

Use. By way of Application, let me once more speak a few words, 1. To the ungodly. 2. To the godly.

1. To the ungodly; my work with them shall be to perswade and direct them how to get into this peaceful and blessed state: Amongst the ungodly,

1. There are some who are far from the Kingdom of Heaven: as,

1. Those upon whom the Ministry of the Gospel hath done nothing at all: that miserable forlorn multitude of the grossly ignorant; who as they were born blind, have

had all their days full a mist of thick darkness abiding upon them, that they are incapable, without a miracle, of being savingly wrought upon. Speak unto them of Faith in Christ, of Repentance unto Life, of obeying the Gospel in the plainest way possible; & you will be as a *Barbarian* to them, as one of a strange Language, they know not what you say; if you should speak *Greek* or *Latin* to them, they would understand it as well as the plainest Truths of the Gospel: A poor Minister of Christ may break his heart, and rend his bowels, in mourning over them; may draw forth his soul in the most melting expressions of his compassions to them, may break his brains in studying how to convey a little light into them, & yet cannot help them, cannot make them to understand so much, as that they understand nothing. Their minds are so wholly blinded by the god of this World, that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, though it shine round about them, cannot find so much as a cranny into their hearts; and being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, they give up themselves to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness; walking in the lusts of their hearts, after the course of this World, in Riot, Luxury, Excess of Wine, Revellings, Banqueting, Covetousness, Lying, Blasphemies, and abominable Adulteries, & Idolatries; and yet remain without any conscience of sin, or fear of their danger; being as natural brutish Beasts, as if they were made for slaughter and destruction.

Are there none such in this place? Doth not the Earth every where groan, our Land mourn, our Congregations travel in pain? Is not this Congregation blacked & burdened with such miserable creatures, who after all the Instructions, Counsels, Wooings, Warnings, Threatnings and Judgments of God which have been in their ears, and before their eyes, remain to this day a stupid, blockish,

blockish,bruitish generation,without the least sense of their sin,or wish to be delivered from it?

Oh you blind and dark souls,consider and understand, if it be possible,these two Scriptures, 2 Cor. 4.3,4. *If our Gospel be hid it is hid to those that are lost. In whom the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of those that beleive not,lest the light of the glorious Gospel should shine unto them.* This darkness is from Hell; the prince of darkness hath held you under your blindness; and this darkness leads to Hell,to the blackness of darkness for ever: You are lost, you are lost souls, lost for ever, if the Gospel leave you in this state of blindness in which you have so securely continued to this day, *Isa. 27.11. It is a people of no understanding;therefore he that made them,will not have mercy on them;he that formed them, will shew them no favour.*

2. Those upon whom the Gospel hath seemed to have done its work;but it is its *strange work.*

There are two works which the Gospel doth:some it enlightens, others it smites with blindness; some it softens, others it seals up under hardness; some it gains over to Christ,others it gives up to the unbelief & impenitence of their hearts,*Isa. 6.10. Make the heart of this people fat,and make their ears heavy,and shut their eyes,lest they see with their eyes, &c.* Go and preach to this people, but preach them into hardness and blindness: because they refused to see or hear, let the light put out their eyes;let the joyful sound strike them deaf, and stop their ears; never leave hammering them, till thou hast hammered them into *Rocks* or *Anvils*. Some there are that have so trifled with Conversions,baffled Conscience,and suffered their lusts so to resist and bear down their light; that have had so many heats and colds,so many thawings and freezings; that have taken up so many purposes,and made so many promises,
and

and yet all comes to nothing ; that the Gospel hath received a charge from the Lord, to make an end of its work: Go, says God, and make an end with these men; I'll be mocked by them no more: I'll be trifled and dallied with by them no longer: wound them no more, fright them no more, perswade them no longer: make their hearts fat, their ears heavy, and shut their eyes and give them up to their hearts lust, that they may walk in their own counsels, and fill up the measure of their iniquities.

You, that after all the warnings you have received from the Lord, and after some workings of them sometimes upon your Consciences, are yet going after your lusts, prostituting your selves to your belluine & sensual pleasures, filling up daily the measure of your iniquities Oh tremble, & consider sadly, whether this be not likely to be your case; that the Gospel hath even done with you, and given you over unto an impenitent heart, and reprobate mind: in hope, that how near soever you are to this dreadful state, you may be yet one step at least short of it; I shall this once more adventure a few words upon you, together with them that I have already mentioned: And first let me reason a little with you.

1. Art thou one of them that obey the Gospel, or not? Art thou one of them that love God, one of the Called according to his promise, or not? Art not thou an Alien, an adversary against God, and a Rebel against his Word? Let thy Conscience speak, let thy Ways speak, let thine Oaths, and thy Drunkenness, & thine Adulteries, thy scoffing at God and his holy ways; thy hating his Instructions, and kicking at his Reproofs; thy hardnings against his Calls; thy treacherous dealings in his Covenant, and the Vows of God that are upon thee; let these speak what thou art: Is this that which God hath chosen and called thee to? Are these the things thou

thou hast learned, and received, and heard of him? Did he ever say, *These things do, and the God of peace shall be with you?* Thou needest no other Conviction, than that of *Israel's*. *Je. 2. 23. How canst thou say, I am not polluted? See thy way in the Valley, and know what thou hast done.* How canst thou say that thou art not a wretch? With what face canst thou deny, but thou art an enemy of God, and of all righteousness? See thy way in the Valley, trace the footsteps of thy life, behold thy practices and thy course: Sure thou art very blind, if thou behold thy self in this glass, and dost not see thy face as the face of a Devil.

There are some, whom it may be harder work to convince, who have the face of a Christian, the tongue of a Saint, but within, the heart of a Beast. Hypocrites are as hard to be convinced, as Hypocrisie is hard to be detected.

But thou who carriest thy wicked heart in thy forehead, upon thy tongue, upon the palms of thy hands, & in the very prints of thy feet, whose malice against God and his Holiness, may be read in every look, in every word, in every line of thy life; needest thou any further proof that thou art not of God? Thou mayest as well put me to prove that *Hell* is not *Heaven*, that the *Devil* is no *Saint*, as that thou art no Christian. Dost [thou] love God, art thou under the hope of the promise? Ask thy ways man, and let these tell thee.

2. Dost thou mean to keep at this distance from God to the death? Dost thou in earnest? Is there nothing in those rich promises that have been laid before thee, which thou canst wish 'twere thine? Is there no such Word in thine heart, *Oh that my lot were here!* Art thou content thy name should be left out for ever? Is there so little in the peace of God, that thou canst sell it for the pleasures of sin? Art thou content that nothing should

should prosper with thee, but that every thing should be a gin and a snare, and a curse to thee? Art thou content that the Pit should be thy place, eternal wrath thy portion, and that every creature, every comfort, every cross that comes should give thee a pluck down from *Heaven* and a kick towards *Hell*? Canst thou think they mean thee any thing else, when all does but harden thee in thy sin & make thee kick against thy God? Art thou so unwilling to leave thy sins for the hope of the promise of God, that thou art content to give up thy hopes for the love of thy sins? Darest thou say, *Let me have my part in the pleasures and contentments of this life, and I am content to relinquish my part in Christ? Let God let me alone in my sins, and let him damn my soul: Let me live at my ease, and my liberty, and let my name be blotted out of the Book of Life: I am content to take my place, and my lot among the damned in another World, so I have my pleasure with them in this World.* And dost thou say less, or other than this, whilest thou refuseth, or resolveth against following thy God? He that refuses to accept of the Redemption of Christ upon the holy terms upon which 'tis offered, says in effect, I am lost, I am sold for a Captive to the Devil; my first father sold me for an apple, Christ would now buy me back again to my self; but for my part, I am content that the first bargain stand: as to my interest, I confirm the bargain; as for my soul being sold to the Devil, to the Devil let it go. This is the voice of every wilful refuser of the terms of the Gospel. Oh wretch! does not thy heart tremble? does not thy hair stand on end? do not thy knees shake? and are not the joints of thy Loins loosed, to consider what thou hast done, and art still a doing?

Sinners, I have but a little more to speak to you, but shall that little be nothing? Hitherto you have stood it out, and will not be perswaded by ought that God hath spoken

spoken by me : But oh ! Must I leave you thus ? Why may not a word at parting do more than all that hath been spoken ? Oh that it might ! Shall neither my first nor last words prevail with you ? What if *my* last, should be *your* last ? If the last that I must preach, be the last that you must hear ? There is a day set, that will be your last day : There is a Sabbath, that will be your last Sabbath : There is a Sermon, that will be your last Sermon : There is a Warning, that will be your last Warning : Oh what if this should be it ! If the Lord should take your *this days denial* for your *final answer*, and never ask your consent again for ever ? But whether it be your last or no, I must be henceforth silent to you : And oh ! will you send me away with so sad an heart, with the sorrow & shame of the disappointed ? Will you break my heart, by persisting to harden yours ? Is this all that I shall have to return to the Lord that sent me unto you ? I have declared thy name unto them, but they did not regard it : I have invited them to come to thee, but they would not follow me : I have warned them to return from their sins, but they would not hearken : Are you willing that I shall give in this answer, & bear this witness against you at the great day ? Sinners hearken, Is there not one blind person among you that is yet willing to have his eyes open'd ? Is there not one captive to lust and vanity, that is willing to be set free from his bondage ? Is there not one more that will be perswaded to be wise, and to prefer an immortal soul, God, Glory, Eternity, before his brutish perishing pleasures ? Is there not one drunkard more, that will yet be perswaded to be sober ? nor one vain person, that will be perswaded to be serious ? am I making my last draught among you, and shall I take nothing ? nor one soul more ? if you will not be prevailed with, then hear the Word of the Lord, *Ezek. 3. 19. If thou warn the wicked, and he*

turn not from his wickedness, he shall die in his iniquity but thou hast delivered thy soul.

But if there be any few relenting hearts among you, who are brought but thus far, to cry out, *Why what must I do?* I would leave with such these few words of counsel, and oh that my counsel might be accepted by them.

1. *Get a deep sense of thy dreadful state; What art thou sinner? What is thy state? at ease, in peace, out of fear, in pleasure? What, and yet a sinner? in the bond of iniquity? Captive to the Devil? without Christ? without the Promise? under the Curse? Study these Scriptures, Job. 8. 34. He that committeth sin, is the servant of sin. Ver. 44. Ye are of your Father the Devil. 2 Tim. 2. 26. Held captive by him at his will, Acts 8. 23. In the gall of bitterness, and the bond of Iniquity, 1 Job. 5. 19. The world lieth in wickedness. Psal. 11. 6. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest, this shall be the portion of their Cup. Psal. 49. 15. Like sheep they are laid in the grave, death shall feed upon them.*

Rise Sampson, the Philistines are upon thee; awake sleeper, the Devil is upon thee; Death is at thy back, the gin is at thy heel, the curse is over thy head, the very next step may be Hell; thou liest in wickedness to day, and maist be in fire and brimstone before to morrow: Sure thou art in a dead sleep, that canst take thine ease in such a lodging. Is this the state thou art so loath to change? Is this the state thou so boastest of, and blestest thy self in? when thine heart is merry with thy wine, swelled with thy pride, jolly amongst thy Companions; put in such a serious question, But what am I all this while? Let this thought sawce thy sweet morsel, spice thy pleasant Cups, and be the burthen of thy merry songs: after this, Hell, Snares, Fire and Brimstone, the vengeance of

eternal fire. Oh an Heaven ! a Paradise ! oh my dear pleasures ! oh my sweet Daughter ! oh my merry days ! what mortal can part with you ? I, but what comes after ? What is there at the bottom ? Look a little before thee, and if that sight turn not thy stomach, sure thou art sufficiently hardy.

Study thy case, and tremble ; and when thou tremblest, there's hope thou wilt turn. Think not of Repentance, or escaping from thy sinful state, till thou see and fear it. We read, *I/sa. 42. 7.* that Christ was sent *to open the blind eyes, & to bring out the prisoners out of prison,* If the prisoners eyes be shut, 'tis to little purpose that the prison doors be open : Their eyes must be first opened, not only that they may see their way [out] but that they may see themselves [in] Prison. Open thine eyes, sinner, if ever thou wilt escape ; open thine eyes, and see where thou art ; Thy fools Paradise wherein thou blessed thy self, is thy souls prison, where thou art like to be held under eternal bondage.

2. Give a present Bill of Divorce to every sin ; hug not death one minute longer in thy bosom : If thou lovest thy life, say not of any one sin, *Nothing but Death shall part thee and me :* No, not so much as this, *Yet a little while, and I will let thee go. To day, to day, if you will hear his voyce, harden not your hearts.*

3. Dread it as Hell, that thy hope in Christ should lessen thy fear of sin. Let not the hope of a Saviour be thy damnation. Make not Christ the *Pandor of sin* ; continue not in sin, because grace hath abounded.

4. Break off from thy Companions in sin ; wilt thou love them to the death ? Christ and thy soul can never be married, till thy soul and sinners be parted. Escape for thy life, get thee up from the Tents of these men, linger not. Thou art held under the power of the Devil, by *cords* , and by *knots* , by the cords of thy sins ,
and

and by the knots of thy *Companions*. There's no hope that the cords of sin will be broken, till the knots of evil *Companions* be loosed. Sinner, these *binding cords* will, if you look not to it, become *whip-cords* to torment thee. Oh take heed thou never come to be lashed with such knotted cords!

Thy *Companions* in sin, as they now heighten thy pleasures, so will they hereafter sharpen thy plagues. Sinners comfort their hearts with this thought, That if they be damned, they shall have store of company: but let them know, that the fire of Hell will burn just so much the cooler for the multitudes that are there, as the fire of their Chimney does for the store of fewel. When thou art charmed with the roaring of thy *Companions* in the Ale-house, think what Musick their roaring with thee will make, when you shall all meet in your eternal Prison. Away from evil Company; you will remember hereafter, when 'tis too late, how much, and with how little success I have laboured with you in this thing.

5. Baffle not conscience once more. Awakened sinner, charm not thy conscience into silence, nor dash it out of countenance. Thy Conscience is the only friend that God or the soul hath left within thee. Thy will, and thy affections, and thine appetite are all gone; the Devil hath stolen them away, and hired them all against thee, thou hast nothing but poor Conscience left.

Thy Conscience hath been often upon thee, pleading with thee for God, and for pity to thy soul; it hath warned thee, reproved thee, & often whisper'd thee in thine ear? What dost thou mean? Whither art thou going? When wilt thou return? Away with thy sins, have done with thy *Companions*, no more of this Drunkenness, this Riot, this Coverousness; thou art a lost man, thy soul is lost if thou go on. This Conscience hath warned thee,

and

and thou hast sometimes hearkened to it, and spoken it fair. The throbs and the pangs, and the wounds thou hast felt and received from it, have rung from thee, now and then, a promise: Well, through the grace of God, I'll hearken to Conscience, I'll be a new man; away from me ye sinners, I will keep the Commandements of my God. And yet shortly after, when thy temptations return, thy Companions come, all is forgotten; and along thou goest, as a fool to the Stocks, or an Ox to the slaughter; and this hath been thy way and thy manner, from time to time. Now and then Conscience draws a sigh, or a tear from thee; and by and by receives a kick or a stab:

Beware sinner, Conscience will not always be thus used. If ever it speak again, say it not nay; its next word may be its last; if ever thou weariest it into perpetual silence, then farewell all for ever; Conscience is the only Friend thou hast left.

Convinced soul! How wilt thou bear the revenges of an awakened abused Conscience? all thy bafflings of it here, will be repeated over in eternity: How will all this look when it shall meet thee before thy Judge? Save thy self from that hour, baffle not Conscience once more

6. Let not the greatness of thy sins, nor the difficulty of Christs terms, hinder or discourage thee from making a present close with Christ. Say not, his Yoke is too heavy, his Cross is too grievous for me to bear, or my sins are too great for him to bear. Set the Throne against the Yoke, the Crown against the Cross, infinite Merit and Mercy, against mighty sins; and go unto Jesus, cast thy self on his blood, and bowels, and put thy self under his Yoke and cepter. If he will give life to thee, be content that he gives Laws to thee: and as ever thou expectest to live by him,

be resolved to live to him, and no longer to thy self. Go to Jesus, and when thou goest, take with thee these two Scriptures, *Mat. 11.28. Come unto me all ye that are weary, and heavy laden, and I will give you rest; Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, and you shall find rest unto your souls, Joh. 6.37. Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.*

7. Fall close to Duties, and keep close to Ordinances

1 Let secret and Family Prayer be thy *daily exercise*. Count not thy self a Christian, till thou give thy self to prayer.

2. Let not reading the Word, Chatechising, &c. be strangers in thy house.

3. Prize, improve, and sanctifie the Sabbaths: The Lord on those days comes down upon his Mount, to meet thy soul, to commune with thee, to bless thee, to feed thee, and fill thee with whatsoever thy soul desireth or wanteth. Get thee up to meet thy God: But remember when thou goest, leave thy stuff behind thee.

4. View often, and take an account of thy self, of the in-come and success of all thy duties: What is all my praying, reading, hearing, &c. come to? What is brought forth? Is the work done for which all these are? Are my sins and my soul parted? Are my Companions in sin abandoned? is Christ and my soul united? Beware you never make Praying and Hearing to serve you [instead] of Believing and Repenting. But to help you on to it.

Remember these seven words when I am gone:

1. Get a sense of thy dreadful state.
2. Abandon presently every sin.
3. Let not thy hope in Christ lessen thy fear of sin.
4. Shake off every sinful Companion.

5. Baffle

5. Baffle not Conscience once more.

6. Make a present close with Christ.

7. Fall close to duties, and keep close to Ordinances.

These things do, and the God of peace shall be with you : But remember, *There is no peace saith my God to the wicked.*

2. There are others that are *near the Kingdom of God. Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God.* There are some that are like *Ephraim, Hos. 7. 8. Cakes half baked; like Agrippa, almost Christians, Act. 26. 29. Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian; ἐν ὁλίγῳ. Thou hast brought me within a little of Christianity.*

They are come to the threshold of saving Faith; within a step of sincere Godliness. They have been professing, and praying, and hoping, and wishing themselves in, and yet are short of it; they have been enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, have tasted of the heavenly gift, have felt something of the sweetness of Christ, have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of many excellent and useful gifts, have tasted of the good Word of God, and the powers of the World to come. They have set out after Christ, have left the blind and prophane World much behind them, have escaped much of the pollutions of this World, left many sins, taken up with many duties, have a name among the Saints, have suffered many things for the name of Christ, and notwithstanding all this, here they stick. they cannot give themselves up fully to Christ; something or other, either the World, or their Companions, or their pleasures, or their ease or their sloth, hath such hold on them, that they cannot *unreservedly, resolvedly*, give themselves up to the Dominion of Jesus Christ, nay, it may be, they cannot tell why, yet they cannot do it. Though they can say, I would be, yet they cannot say, I will be

the Lords. These are near the Kingdom of God, but yet short of it. He that cannot say, *I will be*, canless say, *I am the Lords*.

But here I must distinguish of two sorts of *almost Christians*.

1. There are some that have reached to *almost*, and are still reaching forwards : the state of such is hopeful, though it be not safe. Oh that we could see more such *almost Christians*.

2. There are others that have reached to, and *rest in almost* ; who mistaking *almost* for *altogether*, do there take up their stand. These are far from the Kingdom of God.

Brethren, I much fear, that among the number of Professors, there are more of these *almost Christians*, than we are aware of : Oh it would make our hearts shake to consider how far many go, to what degree of resignation, resolution, affection, action, submission to sufferings, they attain; and yet fall off at last, and thereby shew they were still short of Christ; *They went out from us, because they were not of us*.

I Particularly pity many of the more sober Gentry, who have a good will to Religion, and a fair respect for the Professors of it ; countenancing holiness, doing many worthy things for the Name and servants of God ; refraining from the viciousness, and vanity of many of their Rank and Quality ; who yet dwelling in temptations, being entangled in carnal correspondencies, entertained with an affluence of carnal delights and pleasures, and finding hereby a strict self-denying and mortified life, to be of greater difficulty to them, than to men of lower rank, are apt to think it not of such necessity : who may possibly upon a narrow enquiry discern, after all their good hopes of themselves, and the great opinions of others concerning them,

them, that they are yet short of that simplicity, and godly sincerity, which alone will prove them Christians indeed.

Blessed be God there are amongst us such, those who have broken through all temptations, have adventured upon the disobliging all the World; have laid down their honours, pleasures, friends, and all their carnal interests whatsoever, at the feet of Christ; and preferring a close communion with God, the peace of a good Conscience, the joys of Religion, yea, the very reproaches of Christ above all their worldly honours, and fleshly pleasures, have given themselves up to the power of the Gospel, and an exemplary Spiritual and Heavenly life. But it is to be feared, lest there be also such, who have deservedly gained great respect among the Saints, and gone far along with them, who yet are come but to the threshold of Christianity; and being afraid to put in, there they are in danger to perish everlastingly, *Quod fere fit non fit*, he that is but almost saved, is damned for altogether.

O Friends, what do you mean? will you lose all the ground you have gotten, all the things you have wrought? shall all your sufferings for the name of Christ be lost, and in vain? after you have tasted the bitterness of the cross, will you not go one step farther, and take the joys of the cross? Is the work of Regeneration brought to the Birth, and shall it at last miscarry, and prove an abortion? would one step more land your souls in the Kingdom of God? are you gotten so near ashore, and will you perish in the Harbour? are you gotten off from the Tents of the *Edomites*, and gotten even to the Borders of *Canaan*, and will you not enter? are you gotten to *Pisgah*, and have a view of the Land of promise, and see that it is a good Land? are you come so near as to see, that true holiness is such a

beautiful state, such a blessed state, and do you wish your selves in, and will you yet die on the other side *Jordan*? you have prayed; put on a little more, prayer may do it: you have laboured and reasoned with, and perswaded your hearts, give not over, a little more labour may prevail. Oh that I knew what to say more, that might bring you on! Oh that the Lord would yet put one word or other in my mouth, that might overcome you! that I might shoot one Arrow more, that might strike home, use one Argument more, that might be cogent, and gain your full consent to Christ, that I might see you safely landed ere I be parted from you. Oh think, think what a dreadful disappointment this will be for you, that are come so near to godliness, as that you verily think you have attained it; if after all the joys, pleasures and hopes, the little Religion you have had, hath sed you withal, you should at last have a **TEKEL** written for your doom, and hear that cutting word pronounced upon you, *Thou art weighed in the ballance, and art found wanting*. With you also would I leave a few words.

1. Lose not both Worlds; this World thou hast lost already, by leaving them so much behinde thee; lose not that which is before, for want of coming on a little farther: think not of hanging always betwixt Heaven and Hell; in the other World there is no middle, either go back, or come on, turn thee to the right hand or to the left.

2. Mistake not *almost* for *altogether*, such a mistake may be mortal. Do not too easily conclude, thou hast already attained; if thou takest something of Christianity to be all, thy *all* is nothing. 'Tis a wonderful thing, to see how easily men satisfy themselves in a matter of such weight and intricacie. Thine heart is deceitful, trie it thoroughly before thou trust it.

One

One grain too light, and thou art undone. God, Glory, Soul, Eternity, all lie at stake; one tittle short of sincerity, and all lost. Be jealous of thy self, never give over suspecting thy state, till thou hast put it past suspicion: Conclude not, till thou hast thoroughly disputed the case; give not over the dispute, till the matter be no longer disputable. Canst thou be to sure? the least mistake is as wide as Heaven and Hell; the bottomless Gulf reaches home to the Threshold of Glory; thy *tantum non*, will be as much as the Devil looks for, only not in, though never so near, will be thy eternal perdition.

3. Beware that this thought, *one time or other I shall have more power*, slacken not thy present care and labour, let not thy hopes undo thee; lose not a present opportunity, in hopes of future ability; labour each day to bring the matter to a *present* issue; and that with no less earnestness, than if this day were to give a final determination; and thou wert sure, that thou wert just come to thy *now or never*.

4. Let not a small matter part Christ and thee. Heaven may not cost thee half so much more as it hath cost thee already. Art thou come within one penny of thy Lords price, and shall that break the bargain?

5. Let not thy Oyl thou hast gotten, serve only for fuel for thy fire. Let not thy common grace thou hast obtained here, be of no other *use*, but to add to thy confusion hereafter: every beam of light that hath shined to thee here, will add to thee horror of thine everlasting darkness. Every drop of Honey thou hast tasted in Religion, will be thy Gall and Wormwood in the day of thy condemnation. Be not more miserable hereafter, for that thou hast been less wicked here; the remembrance how far thou wert once for Glory,

will be one of the sharpest Teeth of thine everlasting Worm.

6. Lastly, Be all or nothing ; come up hither, or get thee down to thy lot : particularly,

1. *Be all unto Christ.*

2. *Let Christ be all to thee.*

3. *Let all Christ be accepted, and improved by thee.*

1. Be all unto Christ, have none to please but Christ, and for Christ; have nothing to seek but Christ, and for Christ; resolve against *Reserves* and *limits*; give up all, and keep back nothing; say not, thus much I can spare, and no more; hitherto I will go, and no farther. Divide not thy self, thy love, thy care, thy aims, betwixt Christ, and any thing else. Let thy whole soul run in one Chanel. Rest not short of a full resignation, and when thou hast resigned, repent not.

2. Let Christ be all to thee; say not, I must have an Estate too, my friends too, my pleasures and my ease too; let Christ be enough, and all to thee; Father, Mother, House, Lands, Portion; say concerning all thou hast else, *Be thou mine Lord, and let these go their way.*

3. Let all of Christ be accepted and improved by thee. Divide not thy self, and divide not Christ; leave not any thing of thy self, for any but Christ; refuse not any thing of Christ, for thy self. Think not *thy* all too much for thee to give, nor *Christ's* all, too much for thee to embrace. Thy half will not satisfy Christ, nor will half of Christ suffice thee. Thou must give and have, and therefore resolve to give and take, all or none. Let all Christ be accepted and improved by thee.

1. The merit of his blood.

2. The light and authority of his Law.

3. The power of his Spirit.

1. Accept the merit of his blood; renounce thine own, and rely on his righteousness; as God hath, so do thou, lay on him all thy iniquities. Think not of *Sanctification*, without *satisfaction*. Think not to satisfy in the least, by ought that thou canst do, let that lye upon him. Judge thy self, but seek to be justified alone through faith in his blood. Say unto the Lord, What I owe to thee, put it upon his account; my Christ must answer for me.

2. Accept, and submit to the light and authority of his Law. Think not he is thy *Priest*, unless he be thy *Prophet* and thy *King*: If he must answer for thee; let him instruct thee, and be thou willing to learn of him; since he hath bought thee, let him govern thee; say not of any thing he requires, *this is too much to do*, since he said not to thee, *'tis too much to die*. Count not thy self a Christian, whilst thou art unwilling to receive the utmost light, or to submit to the utmost of thy duty; say not of any one thing, of all that Christ requires, This I must have abated, and then I will be his.

3. Accept and exert the power of his Spirit. The Spirit of the Lord is a Spirit of Power. The same Argument which the Apostle uses to prove himself a Minister of Christ, is necessary to prove thee a Christian, 2 Cor. 13.3,4. *Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you ward is not weak, but is mighty in you. Though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God; for we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God. (Ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me,) ye put me to prove that I am a Minister of Christ; why, here's the proof of it, (My preaching hath not been weak, but mighty in you,) it hath been followed and attested by the power of Christ, which hath wrought mightily*

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in you;) It hath been followed and attested by the power of Christ, which hath wrought mightily in you; as weak as we are, yet the power of Christ hath been manifest and magnified in us. Dost thou seek a proof of thy Christianity? why, here must be the proof, that though thou art weak of thy self, yet thou livest in the power of God, which is mighty in thee. Though thou canst do nothing of thy self, yet thou art able to do all things through Christ which strengthens thee.

Thou sayest, thou art *willing*, but thou art *weak*; thou desirest to be, and to do, what God would have thee, but thou canst not perform.

This may comfort and support thee much, under thy failings and miscarriages in some particular duties; but if this be thy case *in ordinary*, in the main of thy life, that *to will is all thou hast*, thou art not a Christian. *He that hath not the Spirit of Christ, is none of his.* And he that hath the Spirit of Christ, it is in him as the living power of God, actually carrying him on in an holy life, *Ezek. 36. 27. I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*

I will not only command, persuade, incline you; but *cause* you. It shall be done, my Spirit shall bring you on, and help you through. Ye shall keep my statutes, and do them. Where ever the Spirit of God hath breathed in the *life of grace*, there are more than breathings out after a *gracious life*. Sincere *grace* hath more in it than *wishings* and *wouldings*, than *attempts* and *overtures*; Life is a power to act, *Phil. 2. 12, 13. Work out your own salvation, for it is God that worketh in you, to will and to do.* Where ever God worketh the *To velle*, he works also the *To operari*. Where ever God works [in] he gives us a power to work

[*omit*] the works of Christianity. Oh rest not till thou find thy self endued with this power from on high, and enabled to go through with thy work; they are not thy *attempts*, but thy *achievements*: they are not thy *Offers* at an *Holy life*, but thy acting it, that must prove thee a Christian; *He that doth righteousness, is righteous.*

Be it thus with thee; be all to Christ, let Christ be all to thee; let all Christ be accepted and improved by thee; heartily accept the merit of Christ's righteousness, submit to the light and authority of his Law, get thy self possess'd with, and live in the power of his Spirit; Be it thus with thee, come up hither, and then thou art safe: Thy *almost* is now come to *altogether*, and if I must now leave thee, thou wilt be the better able to spare me: *These things do, and the God of Peace shall be with thee.* Thou art gotten into Sanctuary, and now whatever Tossings and Tumblings, whatsoever unpleasing or afflicting changes may be thy lot in this World, thou maist sing that *Requiem* to thy self, *Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee: Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth thee.*

Though thou walkest through the shadow of death, thou mayest now sit thee down under the shadow of thy Lord with great delight, and with great security, whose fruit shall be ever sweet to thy taste: Though thou dwellest in *Mesech*, and hast thy habitation among the Tents of *Kedar*, yet thou maist lay thee down in peace, and take thy rest, for the Lord doth, the Lord will make thee to dwell in safety.

2. To the Godly.

Happy souls! *The God of peace is with you, all things shall work for good to you; only that he may continue*
with

with you, continue you with him, in the obedience of that Gospel to which you have delivered up your selves.

My *Exhortation* to you shall be:

1. General, Respecting the whole course of your Lives.

2. Particular; Respecting your daily Walk.

My general *Exhortation* shall be bottomed on that of the Apostle, Phil. 1. 27, 28. *Let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ; that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one Spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel. In nothing terrified by your adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God*

[*Let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel.*]

Walk worthy of the Gospel, let your lives be suitable and answerable to the holy Gospel, which you profess.

1. Let your lives answer the ends of the Gospel, the exaltation of the Name and glorious grace of God in Christ, live an humble, self-denying, self-abasing life; this is a Christ exalting life.

2. Let your lives answer the dignities and honours the Gospel invests you with. You are the children of God, the heirs of Glory, the spouse of Christ, the Bride, the Lambs Wife: You are a Royal Priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; know your privileges, and do not live below your selves; defile not your glory, by stooping to a carnal and earthly life; a Jewel is not more unbecoming a Swines snout, than fleshly Husks, a Saints Palate: 'Tis below you, who are a peculiar people to your God to live in common with the men of this world; humble your selves into the least of Saints, but do not humble your selves into Brutes. Live in the Spirit, converse with God, be deal-

ing for Glory, honour, and Immortality.

3. Let your Lives answer the *Names* which the Gospel puts upon you, *Doves, Lambs, Lilies*; be harmless, peaceable, gentle, beautiful, fragrant, sending forth a precious savour in the world.

4. Let your Lives answer *the riches*, the reward, the Crown, the Kingdom which the Gospel sets before you.

Live a *contented life*, be satisfied, be well pleased with what you have here, be it little or much; disgrace not your portion the Gospel allots you, as if it were a poor insufficient Portion: Let your souls say, *How small a handful forever you have of this Earth, it is enough, Christ is mine*: A discontented Christian says, *Christ is not enough, Heaven is not enough*. Let the Contentation of thy Spirit, declare before the World that *the lines are fallen to thee in a pleasant place, and that thou hast a goodly heritage*: Do not put this *scorn* upon God and Glory, that thou must be beholding to the Devil, to mend thy portion.

Christian, either thou art within the promise, or a Stranger from it: either thou hast the *God of peace* with thee, or not; if not, methinks thou should find other matter to take up thy thoughts, and not have leisure to perplex thy self with every trivial want; that thy meat, or thy drink, or thine house, or the carriage of thy Friends towards thee, are not according to thy mind; thy soul, thy soul man, thy life is in danger. Oh what an Eternity art thou like to have of it? Canst thou want a God, a Christ, an Heaven, and thine heart never stir at it? and is it the dissatisfaction of thy vain mind or appetite, such a Burthen? Is the Devil in thy heart, and it never moves thee? And shall an ill Neighbour be a vexation to thee? Canst thou feel a Fearer, when thou hast a Talent upon thee? the curse, the curse of God is upon thee: I cannot

cannot wonder *thou* shouldst be discontent; but *me* thinks these small matters, by a man in thy case, should not be minded.

If Christ and the Promise be thine, is not that enough? are not all things enough? God is all things: He that hath the Son, hath not only with *him*, but in him all things. Are all things nothing with thee? what wouldst thou have more then all? The *Heathens* acknowledged, *that vertue is sufficient*. It was a *Maxime* among the ancient Philosophers *αὐτάρκης ἡ ἀρετή*, *Vertue is self-sufficient*; a vertuous man hath no need to be beholding either to Friends or Fortune, he hath enough in himself. The Apostle tells us, that *Godliness* *μετ' αὐτάρκειας*, with its *self-sufficiency*, is *great gain*, 1 Tim. 6. 6. Solomon tells us, Prov. 14. 14. *A good man is satisfied from himself*. He hath that within him, out of which his satisfaction grows. A Christian hath the whole Gospel within him: he hath Christ, the Promise, the Everlasting God, Heaven, glory, within him: as rich as he is, he may truly say, *Omnia mea mecum porto*. He carries his *all* in his heart, and can thence get out a living, a sufficiency for all Times, Cases, and Wants: cast him out naked out of his Habitation, out of his Country, yet he carries all with him, he leaves not an Hoof behind him.

Christians, Leave it to the poor of the Earth, to carnal men, (the richest of them is poor enough) leave it to them to be discontent. A carnal man hath so many to be beholding to, to patch up his contentment, that 'tis no wonder he falls short of it; the Sun, the Clouds his Fields, his Folds, his Friends, his Enemies, his Honours, his Pleasures, his Meat, his Drink, his House, his Money, yes, the Devil and all, and his Lusts, every Creature must come in with their part, to contribute to his contentment; if but one thing fails him, there's some-

Something wanting to make it up; nay, if none fail, but they all do their best to please him, yet all will not do, *in the fulness of his sufficiency he is in straits.* When he hath all he can have, his still hungry heart cries out of what it hath, *Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.* Leave it to these, Christians, who have nothing but emptiness to fill their souls withal, leave it to them to be discontented. Will you lay the same imputation upon the God of Glory? The discontent of a Christian, is a kind of Blasphemy; it proclaims concerning God also, and all the Glory of the Gospel, This also is Vanity, *Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.*

Christians, Study your Riches more, count over your Treasures; dwell more in your God, and his Gospel; Read over your Priviledges, Promises, and Hopes; feed more on that Bread of life, drink more freely of those living Springs, which are broken forth to you. Prove more what godliness hath in it, get out the sweetness and the pleasure of it, (none in the world live such a voluptuous life, as he that lives most with God) get out the pleasure of godliness, lie more at the Breasts, suck harder, press the Clusters and the Wine and Milk will come; make the most of Religion, and you will have enough; never blame it for empty, or unsatisfactory, while there is more to be had.

Go not into other Pastures run not from Flower to Flower, keep you home: Let not your God find you in another Field: If you keep with God, the less you have of Creature-vanities, the more full will your contentment be. Christian, Honour thy God and his Gospel, let his Breasts satisfy thee, and err thou always in his love. Let the World read the Gospel-sufficiency in thy souls pleasure, and satisfaction with it alone.

5. Let your conversations answer the supports of the Gospel and its succours. Live a patient life, *J. m. 7. 5.*

Be patient, Brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Patience is a grace suited to our present Gospel-state; I will call it, a Friend that's born for the day of adversity. If you are Christians, you have need of Patience; and if you have Patience, you need no more, James 1. 4. Let patience have her perfect work, that you may be entire Lacking nothing.

Patience, is a submitting, sedate, and calm frame of spirit, whereby a Christian, from Gospel grounds, is born up under all his Troubles, and born through all his Duties.

Betwixt *Patience* and *Contentedness*, there is this difference; *Contentedness* is the quiet of the heart, and its satisfaction with its *smallest portion of good things*. *Patience* is the quiet of the heart under the *greatest pressure of evil things*.

A *patient spirit* is a *submitting spirit*; It's heartily content that God should have his Will. With whatsoever God is pleased, it will not be displeased. *It's the Lord, let him do whatsoever seems good in his Eyes*. What seems good in Gods eyes, shall not seem evil in mine.

It is a *Calm and quiet spirit*: It will not strive nor cry, nor lift up its voice in the streets; it can *mourn*, but it does not *murmur*; it can *feel*, but it will not *fret* at the hand of God. A patient person is ever *compos mentis*, hath the command and government of his spirit, keeps it sober, and in due order, doth not rave and rage. Impatience is a kind of frenzy; such persons are *besides themselves*. In our patience we possess, and by our impatience we lose our souls: we lose the rule and government of them, the peace and the use of them. An impatient man is besides himself, both as a man and as a Christian.

1. He is besides himself *as a man*, Impatience turns Reason out of doors; and for the affections, they are all

are all in an uproar, and will know no command or government.

2. He is besides himself, *as a Christian* turned quite out of course: Duties, Comforts, Experiences, Hopes, all are laid aside. Keep you quiet, keep the peace in your heart, and you keep your heart.

In this calmness & quietness, *it bears up under troubles*. Patience hath fortitude in it, it neither frets nor faints under all its burthens. Christians *must* bear, and patient Christians *can* bear any thing that comes on them. The proper exercise of patience, is *enduring*; he endures not that suffers only, but that can bear what he suffers.

It bears through its Duties: The passion of a patient person doth not hinder his action; he holds his course, keeps on his way, whatever load he hath on his back. He (runs) with patience the race which is set before him; he is not discouraged, nor diverted from his holy course by any suffering it costs him.

And indeed, Christian patience stands not in a bare forced quiet, in a biting in, or keeping down our fretting affections, from venting themselves in words or carriage, or in a sullen silence or stupidity; but in the maintaining such a tranquility of spirit under all we suffer, as that we can still both enjoy and serve the Lord. He is a patient Christian, that is as much a Christian in a storm, as a calm; that can pray, believe, love, bless God, follow God, and keep his way when he smites, as when he smiles.

Lastly, in all this, a Christian is upheld & carried on *from Gospel-ground*. 'Tis not a natural hardness or apathy; 'tis not the spirit of a man that does sustain his infirmities; 'tis upon the everlasting gospel that he stands. There are three things especially that bear him through. His viewing, 1 The hand of the Lord. 2 The End of

the Lord. 3. The help of the Lord.

1. He sees *the hand of the Lord* in all that befalls him: Whence was *David's* patience? *Psal. 39. 9. I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou Lord didst it.* Whence was *Eli's* patience? *1 Sam. 3. It is the Lord, let him do what seems him good.* Whence was *Job's* patience? *Job. 1. 21. The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the Name of the Lord.* By the way note, That a godly man is not only patient under his afflictions, but thankful: He is not only thankful for Mercies, but for Chastisements. 'Tis not only, *the Lord hath given*, blessed be his Name; the Lord hath built me up, the Lord hath filled me, the Lord hath hedged me, blessed be his Name: but also, *The Lord hath taken away*, the Lord hath humbled me, broken me, undone me, left me naked, left me nothing, blessed be the Name of the Lord. This by the way.

2. He sees *the end of the Lord*; that God intends his good by all that comes upon him. He knows that all things, and therefore this which is upon him, whatever it be, shall work to him for good.

3. He feels *the Help of the Lord*. When the hand of the Lord is upon him, he feels also the hand of the Lord under him, *underneath the everlasting arms*, Deut. 32. 27.

The Gospel, as it hath allotted him many Tribulations, so it hath allowed him many Supports, *A mighty God*, who is the Rock of Ages, *Isa. 26. A merciful High Priest*, who being tempted himself, is able also to succour those that are tempted, *Heb. 2. 18. precious promises*, *2 Pet. 1. gracious experiences*, *Rom. 5. 4. Patience worketh experience*. This last support *Experience*, hath all the rest in it. Experience is the whole Gospel proved. A patient, experienced Christian hath proved all things, what they are; hath proved the world, and
what

what it is, and the worst it can do; hath proved the word; and what there is in it; hath proved what God is, what Christ is, what Grace, Peace, and a good Conscience are: Tribulation often takes away God and his Gospel, and we never so well prove what God is, as when we have him alone; what Grace is, what a good Conscience is, as when we have nothing else left us. Our Religion never shews so much what is in it, as when it's most put to it. When the Adversary hath gotten the greatest advantage of us, of the Sun, of the Wind, of the Ground; when he presseth with most violence, with most fury upon us, then we best know what the weapons of our Warfare are. The comforts & supports of Religion are not known, either of what strength or of what sweetness they are, till they are thus proved. *Hezekiah* had never such a taste of his integrity, as when he received the Message of death. *Stephen* had never such a sight of Heaven, as through a storm of Stones. Christ is never so sweet as in a Prison. When God meets his Saints in a Wilderness, then he speaks comfortably to them. A patient Christian hath more or less experience of all this; and hence is he supported, keeps quiet under all his sufferings, and carried with courage on his way.

Be patient therefore, Brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. You have need of patience, and no excuse for your impatience. The sufferings of the Gospel call for patience; and the supports of the Gospel will condemn your impatience. If you will be godly, count upon it, that you have a great fight of afflictions to endure. Venture not into the fight without your Armour: An impatient Creature is a naked Souldier; how easily will Satan destroy, whom he hath once disarmed. The more you *can*, the less you *shall* suffer. Secure your spirit, and you save your self from harm. There's no

dart shall hurt you, that does not hit your heart. Keep your heart whole, and the Devil loses all his shot. Be patient, and you possess your souls; keep your souls, and the enemy loses the day.

Christians, 'tis of great consequence to you, to be of a patient spirit, and 'tis a great duty; there's much more in it than every eye observes.

When I perswade you to *Patience*, know, that 'tis no small thing that I am perswading you to : 'Tis no less than,

1. To the whole of Christianity.

2. To the height of Christianity.

1. To the *whole of Christianity*: To be truly patient, hath as much in it, as to be a Christian : To be holy, humble, meek, mortified, self-denying, crucified to the World, heavenly minded ; all this you must be, or you cannot be patient. Patient and Proud; patient & peevish; patient and unmortified ! earthly-minded, a self-seeker ! This is as great a contradiction, as to be proud and humble, fleshly and spiritual, earthly & heavenly, a Christian and no Christian. If ever you will be possessors of this grace, you must be partakers of all grace. Get a believing, broken, self-denying heart ; get your spirits furnished with the love of Christ, the hope of the Gospel, the contempt of the World ; live above in the other world : Let Christ, Glory, Honour, Immortality, be the portion of your souls, and the pleasure of your lives, if ever you would be truly patient.

2. To *Christianity in the height of it*: In pressing you to *Patience*, I am herein pressing you to get *Assurance*. Without assurance, though patience be possible, yet you'll find it both difficult and very imperfect.

What patience, when I question whether my sins be forgiven? whether God be reconciled, and be not dealing with me as an Enemy ? what *Patience*, when I doubt

doubt whether my afflictions be not the pension of a bastard, rather than the portion of a Son? when I am not sure but my present sufferings are sent to carry me down to eternal sufferings? I am in misery & perpetual torments, never a day without its evils, I can see no end of it, nor it may be never shall; this or worse, may last for ever. Oh, if I were sure it would be well at last, I could be quiet; but for ought I know, the Furnace I am in, may be the very mouth of Hell; the diseases, the wounds I am under, may be sent to let out my soul into everlasting burnings; how can I be patient under such doubts and fears? Make God sure, *Christian*, make Heaven sure once, and then thou maiest set thine heart at rest; then thou mayest almost as easily exercise, as thine Enemies find the exercise of thy patience.

Christians, if you will be patient, you must be painful; give diligence, be diligent in making your Calling and Election sure; be diligent in duty, be vigilant against iniquity: If you will be patient, be impatient of sin, and you will be patient of sorrow; make sin sure, get it slain by the Cross, & buried in the grave of your Lord, sealing the stone, and setting a watch; have nothing to conflict with in the day of your affliction, but your affliction; beware of carrying guilt with you upon the Cross. Let not the gall of guilt be mingled with the vinegar of affliction: A mortified spirit will deaden all our pains, and a pure Conscience will bear all our burthens.

Till this be done, I must tell you, you will find suffering to be hard service. 'Tis an easie matter to talk of the sufferings of the Gospel, & to boast great things beforehand, as you know who did once, and what came of it, *Though I die with thee, I will never deny thee*. But when it comes to the pinch, when Troubles come upon us, when the hand of the Lord touches us, and touches

where it's most tender, brings those calamities on us, which are most contrary to us, strips us of those comforts which are most dear to us, takes away all from us, & leaves us naked; when we feel the *smart* of the Rod, when every stroke fetches blood, when the feet are hurt in the Stocks, and the Iron enters into the soul; when the vinegar and the gall comes, when the thorns and the nails of the Cross are struck in; when shame and reproach, when scorn and contempt, when hunger and thirst, when cold and nakedness, when bodily torment and pain, are all measured to you for your potion, and mingled in your Cup : if ever God should call you out to take your part with that cloud of witnesses, *Heb.* 11. who were tortured, had trials of cruel mockings & scourgings, of bonds and imprisonment; who were stoned, were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; wandering about in Sheep-skins and Goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted and tormented; wandering in Deserts & Mountains, in Dens & Caves of the earth : if ever this should be your case, then you will know how much there is in Christian patience; & how necessary self-denial, mortification, living in the faith and fellowship of God, and the power of his Spirit, and assurance of his love, are to your patient possessing of your souls.

Believe it, *Christians*, the Gospel hath not furnished us with such large provision of Graces, Comforts, Promises, Hopes, for nothing; you will find need enough of them all. Such amazing, astonishing trials you may be called out to, as nothing less than the richest stock of Promises, the greatest treasure of Experiences, the highest pitch of spiritual Graces, your greatest conquest over lust & the world, your living under the fullest influences of Divine Power, and the clearest sense of Divine Love, will furnish you with an enduring spirit; nothing less

less will, but this will do it. Get sin and the world under; make God sure, make the Promises sure, live in a daily conflict with sin; contempt of the world, and exercise of all Graces: Live in the obedience, vision, and fruition of your God, and then you are ready for the enemy. Let your sufferings be what they will, come when they will, your souls are at Anchor, and shall have a continual calm within, how tempestuous soever the Weather be.

As a farther encouragement and help to this great Duty, consider that your patient suffering will be,

1. Your witness to the Gospel.
2. Gods witness to your Adoption.
3. The Cure of your Corruption.
4. Your triumph over Temptation.
5. The improvement of your Sanctification.
6. The advance of your Glory.

1. Your patient suffering will be your *witness to the Gospel*. Who were that cloud of witnesses mentioned, *Heb. 12. 1.* but the suffering Saints, that Army of Martyrs, recorded *Chap. 11.* whose patience is set forth as a pattern to those that should come after? These are the Witnesses.

What was it by which they bear witness, but by their patient suffering?

To what did they bear witness, but to God and his Gospel?

What witness did they bear? Way, *That the Gospel is true*: The sufferings of the Saints are their seal to the Gospel. As he that believeth, so much more, he that suffereth in Faith, hath set to his seal that God is true. In the faith and patience of the Saints, may be seen (as the seal in the wax) the prints and impressions of the truth and faithfulness of God. God hath said, he will uphold, he will not forsake them: and their patience

shews, he doth uphold, he hath not forsaken them.

2. *That the Gospel is a glorious Gospel* : That God is a good Master, that it's good being with Christ any where; that they are no losers by their Religion, but that its wages are above its work, and its pay above its pain.

It were not possible, when they prove how much the Gospel costs them, but they should be weary of it, and repent of their Faith, and renounce their Profession, if they did not find the Lord a good pay-master.

The Apostle tells us, 2 Cor. 3. 3. that Christians are *the Epistles of Christ*, or his *Letters* of commendation to the World, in whom may be read his Excellencies and Glory, and the incomparable advantages of his service. And as all Christians, so especially suffering Christians : the Character of Christ is never so visible and legible, as when 'tis written in blood. The bowels, and bounty, and kindness of God our Saviour, never appeared in more glory, than upon [his] Cross; & there's no such lively Transcript of them, as upon [our] Cross. On his Cross, his blood; on our Cross, his Spirit, & the precious grace and comforts of it, are most plentifully shed forth, 1 Pet. 4. 14. *If ye be reproached, that is, & endure it, the Spirit of Glory, and of God, resteth upon you.* The Spirit and influences of a crucified Jesus, do never shine forth to such advantage, as in his crucified Saints. Upon the patience of a Saint, under the sufferings of Christ, he that runs may read this written, *I serve a good Master.* Our patient suffering is our witness to Christ and his Gospel.

Christian, when God sends thee to *Calvary*, he sends thee thither as a chosen Vessel, that thou shouldst there bear his Name before the world. Art thou impatient at this? What, canst thou not bear this honour thy God hath laid upon thee? Hath God chosen thee amongst all thy brethren to do him this honour, and wilt thou be
angry

angry, that he did not rather choose some other? 'Twas an unworthy answer of a good man, *Moses*, when God sent him to *Egypt*, to appear for him before *Pharaoh*, & to be the deliverer of his People, *Exod. 4. 13. Send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.* Send whom thou wilt, any body but me. By our sinul shifting our selves out of troubles, or our murmurings under them, we say the like : Send whom thou wilt to witness for thee, but let me go free: Let me have my ease, and my quiet, and my liberty, & take this honour who will for me. Unworthy spirits ! Oh, methinks, Christians, we should rather step one before another ; and when our Lord demands, *Who wil go with me? who wil bear my Cross?* methinks we should readily answer, *I will go, let me bear it Lord;* and not grudge, as we do, that he puts us to it.

Our impatience *bears false witness* against God, and his Gospel; what is the voice or the meaning of impatience less than this ?

Whatever is said in honour of the Gospel, what a blessedness, what an ineffable advantage 'tis, to all that heartily own it; yet having proved it, I find it even as much as nothing, by that all costs and charges of it are cast up; the comforts of it will never ballance them; set one against another, the bad against the good, the bitter against the sweet : Set one against another, and I have made but a bad bargain, by becoming a Christian. This is the voice of impatience. Christian, thou passest over thy murmuring, as a light evil, as if thy pain might excuse thy pettishness, as if it were, because 'tis so common a very small thing; but is it nothing to belie God, to bear false witness against his Gospel? thy repining at the sufferings of Christ, is next to repenting that ever thou wert a Christian.

Brethren, Let us do the Lord this right, by the patience of our spirits, to confess before the world, *That all*
the

the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed; And looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our Faith; Let us learn of him, for the joy that is set before us, to endure the Cross, and despise the shame, that we may sit down at his, as he is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God.

Secondly, Your patient suffering will be *Gods witness of your Adoption, Heb. 12.7. If you endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with Sons: The Lord doth not use to deal so with strangers.*

Afflictions are Gods *Family Discipline*. Yet mark, 'tis not the suffering alone will prove our Sonship, (the Rod is for the Fools back, as well as the Childs) but patient suffering will. For,

1. Patient suffering is it self an evidence of our Adoption, it is the mark of the Lord Jesus upon us. If thou hast both the same lot, and the same spirit that was upon Christ, there's thy Lords mark upon thee, whereby he marks thee out for one of his own. Men had need of other marks to prove them Christians, than what the Rod hath made on their backs; 'tis our quiet submitting to it, & that upon Gospel grounds, as hath been before shewed, that must do it, and this will be evidence enough. None but a Son will thus submit.

2. The suffering state of Christians, is ordinarily attended with other evidences. Sufferings will set patience on work, & patience will set every other grace on work. Whatsoever it be, that finds work for patience, will therein find work for faith, and love, and hope, and self-denial. Christians never appear so much Believers, so humble, so mortified, as under the Cross. If there be any faith, or love, or hope in the heart, 'twill appear in the day of adversity. If there be any fire under the ashes, throw on water, and you shall hear it, when it may be before, you could see none there. As *Solomon* says,

says, *folly*, so we may say, *wisdom*, grace is bound up in the heart of a child; but the rod of Correction will fetch it out. We seldom know either how bad, or how good our hearts are, till they are thus proved: *This I did to prove thee, and to know what is thine heart.*

Besides, this is the season, when ordinarily there are most plentiful illapses and incomes from above; God seldom sends such tokens of love, as to his children in prison. The light of his countenance he often reserves for their darkest estate, he sets to his seal, when the wax is on fire. There have been Christians that would never believe that they were such, till God hath told it them at the stake; the highest joyes, the fullest sense of everlasting kindness, have been most ordinarily the portion of Gods Martyrs. When Hell is let loose upon them, then Heaven is most open. Many Christians have met with such refreshing in their bonds, that their enlargement hath been their prison.

If this be so, Christians, who would fear sufferings? who would not be patient? Would it comfort you to know that God is your Father? Be patient and you shall know it. What would you not bear, so you might be sure you are the Lords? It may be you have been held under doubts and fears, and sad uncertainties, hitherto all your days; you have gone about from *duty* to *duty*, from *ordinance* to *ordinance*, from *Christian* to *Christian*, enquiring, and mourning, and complaining, and crying out. Oh, if I were sure that Christ were mine, that my faith, and my love, and my hope, and my obedience were sound and sincere, such as would prove my adoption, then I could be quiet: Why, if ever God calls thee to sufferings, follow him chearfully. He calls thee out, to prove to thee that thou lovest him. Fear not to go up with him on the Cross. Assurance is a fruit, that most ordinarily grows on that Tree.

Let

Let hypocrites only fear sufferings, 'twill be sad indeed to them; there's many a self deceiving Professor, that never suspected himself to be an hypocrite, till persecution made him an Apostate; that's a woful case to have sufferings come upon him for the Gospels sake, only to tell him, that he hath no part in Christ nor his Gospel. Let hypocrites be afraid and unquiet, but let Saints be patient. The same trials which will prove them Bastards, will prove you Sons.

3. Your patient suffering is the *cure of your Corruption*. Sufferings are our Medicine for corruption, & patience our cure: To what degree of patience a Christian hath attained, that degree of power hath he gotten over iniquity. Till lust be conquered, there's no patience: if there be but one unmortified Corruption remaining, and an affliction comes and grates upon that, this will provoke, there's no bearing it. Whence is impatience, but from this, for the most part, that we cannot bear any violence that's offered to lust? What is patience, but this, that we can bear that pain, that lust, when pinched, will put us to? Quietly to suffer our pride, our envy, our passion, our sensual appetites, to be cut short of what would gratifie them; and freely to leave them under that which comes to kill and crucifie them; to be able to want that fuel that feeds, and endure that water that doth quench these fires; this is patience. When our pride is stript of its ornaments, our appetites deprived of their delicates, our covetousness of its substance, our flesh is of its ease, and we either feel no smart, or can bear the smart of it, then we are patient. And when we can thus leave our *Corruptions* to whatever sufferings come upon them, without taking part with them in their sufferings, then lust is conquered. Lust no longer lives nor maintains its power and interest in us, than whilst, in all its afflictions, we are afflicted:

afflicted: when we feel its sufferings as our sufferings, its disappointments and dissatisfactions, as our own, and fly out against whatsoever falls upon it, as if it fell upon our souls. When we can say, 'tis my passion that suffers, but not I; 'tis but my Covetousness that suffers, my Pride that suffers, but not I; and let them suffer (for me) let them be pinch'd, and pain'd, & starv'd, and die, none of all this shall move me: nay, herein I do and I will rejoyce: There's patience. Patience is Lust conquered.

Christians, You complain of Corruption, you tell one another sad stories, what a burden, what a bondage 'tis you are under, whilst lust hath such power in you; what Briars and Thorns, what Plagues and Stings they are in your hearts. You pray, and you mourn, and groan, and sigh in your selves, waiting for your redemption from this bondage and misery. Oh for an humble heart! oh for a broken mortified spirit! oh this earthliness, this envy, this peevishness, this slothfulness! *I am weary of my life, because of these daughters of Hell. Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death! why would you be delivered?*

Be patient under afflictions; they are the *Executioners* sent from God to slay your Enemies, the *Medicines* sent from your Physician to cure your *Diseases*; never quarrel with Affliction, unless you resolve to befriend *Corruption*. What, will you be so foolish, as not to be patient of your *Disease*, nor your *Remedy*; either bear the Cross, or else never make your selves believe but you can bear your sins well enough? whatever your complaints are, 'tis a sign they come not very deep, 'tis an Argument that sin sits light, where the Cross lies so unsupportable heavy.

4. Your patient suffering will be your triumph over temptation. A patient Christian is a Conquerour over all the World. By this alone naked Job overcame the Devil. When Satan and his instruments have persecuted you into patience, they have therein brought their necks under your feet. This Brazen Wall will make their shot recoil on their own heads and hearts: Your patience will be a shield to yours, & a sword in your Enemies souls. Be patient, and you have won the field, and gotten the day. They will have no hope to drive you to sin, where they see you can suffer. This was *Jobs* triumph, and shall be yours, *In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.* You may now make your boast in the words of the Apostle, *Rom. 8. 35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? In all these things we are more than Conquerors, through him that loved us.*

5. Your patient suffering will be the improvement of your sanctification, *Heb. 12. 9, 10. We have had Fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily, for a few days chastened us after their pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.* The Fathers of our flesh correct us, and so doth the Father of spirits, they at their pleasure, he for our profit. You'll say, it may be, for what profit? What profit is there in our blood, in our bonds, in our poverty? Why, there is this profit; we are hereby made partakers of his holiness. There's seldom any towardliness in a child, till it be whipt into him. Gods School of Affliction, is a Nursery for Heaven: Were it not for his House of Correction, Sion would quickly become as Sodom. Seldom does any come out thence, but their complexion shews where they

they have been. 'Tis with them that feel the hand of the Lord, as it was with him that saw his face, his face did shine; his very spitting in their faces, doth wash them the cleaner. Of all Saints, there are none raised so high towards the third Heaven, as those that have been in the deep. No Providences give such a lift to the soul, as those that most humble.

Christians, what ever pains you travel under, believe it, the births may be such, as will make you forget your sorrow.

I have heard of an holy woman, who used to compare her afflictions to her children, they both put her to great pain in the bearing; but as she knew not which of her children to be without, notwithstanding her trouble in the bringing forth, so neither which of her afflictions she could have wanted, notwithstanding the sorrow they put her to in the bearing, *Heb. 12. 11. No chastening for the present is joyous, but grievous; but afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby.*

Oh, when you see the fruit, where then will your sorrow be, *Job. 16. 21. A woman when she is in travel, hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man-child is born into the world.*

If the joy of the birth will make you forget, why should not the hope of the birth make you to bear the pain?

Beloved, would you bring forth fruits unto God, and will you not bear the Plough and the Harrow? Will you expect an Harvest, & yet must God let you lye fallow, and still sow among thorns? Let me ask you, and answer deliberately: Would you be more holy than you are, more fruitful than you are, or would you not? if you would not, you are no Christians, *Si dixeris sufficit,*

fieri defecisti: If you would, is that desire conditional ? You would increase, so it cost you not overmuch labour and pain; that desire comes to just so much as no desire at all : Or is your desire of an increase, *absolute* ? would you be more holy, whatever it cost you ? Do you so surprize and love an holy and fruitful life, that you are heartily content that God should take his own course with you, should take any course that's needful to bring you on to it ? can you freely say, O Lord, I am weary of this trifling, I am weary of this dead & barren life; Lord quicken me, Lord enlarge me, Lord perfect thy work, and fulfil in me all the good pleasure of thy will: So thou wilt but hear me in this thing, I freely put it into thy hand to take thine own way, and use thine own means. Use the Word or the Rod. Command me, or chastise me, spare not this flesh for all its crying, strip me of what thou wilt, inflict on me what thou wilt, throw me whither thou pleasest, let me not want the most bitter Pill that's needful, any thing, any thing Lord; I hope I can be poor, if thou wilt have me so, I can be in pain, in disgrace, if thou wilt have me: But I cannot be unholy, I cannot bear it to be such a starveling in the state of my soul. Lord, for more holiness; Lord, for more life, and care, and zeal, and fruit, let me have it upon what terms thou pleasest, only let me have it. Can you say thus to the Lord ? I hope you can; what, and yet be displeased if he take you at your word ? can you pray thus, and yet repine and murmur that the Lord hears your prayers ? Christian, when the Lord comes to deal roughly with thee, entertain his chastisements, whatever they be, with this thought ; Now the Lord is about to give me my hearts desire; now is my day of hope : this distress, this sorrow and anguish, the Lord hath brought upon me, may be come to perform that work which I have longed to see, what the word
hath

hath been so long a doing, and yet is not done. What Sacraments, Prayers, Mercies, have been so long a doing, and yet is not done. Now is the time, this may be the means to bring it about. This bitter cup hath health in the bottom; this Plough, and these deep furrows it makes, look towards an harvest. The work is doing that I have been so long a begging. This froward, this senseless, this sloathful, this earthly, barren heart, which I feel to day, I hope now, in a little time, I shall be rid of for ever. If this be the meaning of my troubles, I hope it is, I will wait, I will wait for the fruit; and if this be the fruit, oh welcome, welcome this blessed Providence.

6. Your impatient suffering shall be *the advance of your glory*. Remember what I have told you already, Your suffering shall go into your reward; according to your deep poverty, so shall your riches be; as 'twas said concerning *Babylon*, *Rev. 18. 7. How much she hath glorified her self, and lived deliciously, so much sorrow and torment give her*. So shall it be said concerning you; *How much they have been abased and afflicted for me, so much joy and glory give them*. As sure as the persecutions of the ungodly shall meet them in Hell, so certainly shall the persecutions of the righteous meet them before the throne of God. This shall be written on their everlasting crowns, *Here is the patience of the Saints*.

By this time you see *Christians*, that a suffering state is not so formidable, nor patience under it so impossible, nor your impatience so excusable, as your hearts are so apt to tell you. Suffering you cannot avoid, but you may abide them; your carnal hearts will cry out, I can't endure, & therefore whatever shift I make, I must avoid them. The Gospel tells you, *you may endure*; but (if you will be *Christians*) you can't avoid them. *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution*.

Well, since it's thus, Gird up the loins of your minds, and follow your Lord. Consider him that endureth such contradictions of sinners, and be not weary, nor faint in your minds : The Captain of your salvation was made perfect through sufferings, and (if ye will be patient) so shall you his followers. Turn to your strong hold, ye *Prisoners of Hope*, prove to the world that your Faith is no fanſie, nor your Rock a refuge of lies; that your profeſſion of holineſs is not a meer talk, or vapour. Fear not to bear yours, & thankfully accept your Lords testimony; when the Lord hath fulfilled his ſad Predictions, let your faith & patience ſeal to the fulfilling his promiſes. Whenever the hand of the Lord touches to the quick, and you feel in earneſt, that 'tis hot ſervice to be a Chriſtian; when your fleſh begins to flie in your face, and cryes out againſt your ſoul, either as *Ziporah* againſt *Moses*, *A bloody husband haſt thou been to me*; or as *Jobs* wiſe to him, *Curſe God and die*: chide it into ſilence, *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women ſpeaketh*. If it will ſtill kick, and fling, & groan out to thee, *dost thou ſtill retain thine integrity*? hearken not to it, leave it to groan alone; as thy fleſh hath left thy ſoul to groan alone under ſin, ſo let thy ſoul leave thy fleſh to groan alone under affliction. While thy ſoul is quiet, there's the glory of patience, though extremity of torment make thy fleſh to roar; nay, the more the fleſh roars, and the ſoul yet keeps ſilence, the more patience.

If your fears afright you, & prophetic to you beforehand, Oh I ſhall never be patient; if the fore-ſight be ſo dreadful, what will the encounter be! Yet be not diſcouraged: you ſay you could be content to ſuffer, if you were ſure you could be patient; that is, you would venture into the water, if you had firſt learn'd to ſwim; why when you are in, then you will learn, and not before.

Tribulation worketh patience, where it findeth none; when you are in the fight, you'l find your weapons; your very sufferings will learn to bear. 'Tis the flesh that flings and frets; but by that it hath been ramed in the house of affliction, it will be quieter. Be jealous of your selves while you will, let not fore-hand presumption hinder fore-hand preparation. But whilst you suspect your selves, trust your God, follow the Cloud of witnesses, and lean on the Rock of Ages; and when you are put hardest to it, let your soul take sanctuary here: *When my flesh and my heart faileth me, God is the strength of mine heart, and my portion for ever.*

Lastly, As that wherein I shall take in the most of these former particulars. Let your lives answer that spirit of holiness which the Gospel hath poured forth upon you; Let your lives be *gracious and holy lives*, Particularly.

1. Let the Grace of the Gospel be *visible*, and conspicuous in your lives: shew forth the virtues of him that hath called *you* out of darkness into his marvellous light: Let your lives be the image of that holy Doctrine, or the holding forth of that word of life which you have received. Admire the grace of God which hath appeared to you; and let his grace appear, and be admired in you. Let grace appear in you in its

{ *Purity.*
{ *Power.*

1. In its *Purity*: represent your God, and your Christ, and your Religion, in its holiness, to the world. Teach the world to love, or at least, to reverence holiness; by letting them see it before their eyes.

Holiness hath such a glory in it, that it will command respect and reverence, when it is clearly seen. Let your *paths* be pure; as God hath separated *you*, to separate your selves from the lusts of men, to the Law of your

God. Keep your selves *upright in the sight of God*, keep your selves *unspotted of the world*; if they will be spotting of you, let it be only with your beauty-spots, your **Wisdom, Truth, Holiness, Mercy, Meekness, Patience,** the Excellencies and Vertues of your God appearing upon you. Let this, that you are too pure, too precise, too tender, too watchful, too fearful of sin, too zealous against sin, be all they have to charge you with.

Keep thee from *thine own iniquities*; say not so much as this, *I am my beloveds, and my beloved must be mine.* Kick out thy *Dalilabs*. Thou must part with thy darling, or thy God; let there be no secret league, let there be no peace betwixt thy soul and any iniquity; to which thou maist either steal out, to delight thee, or turn in to hide thee; let no iniquity be thy leisure or protection: if when thou art pursued by a Persecuter, any sin, as *Jael* to *Sisera*, should call to thee, *Turn in hither*, and thou maist escape, remember the nail and the hammer; let no iniquity find a corner in thee to lodge in quiet, that thou maist not think a corner with it, where thou maist lodge in safety; say to all thy sinful delights and sinful hopes, get you gone, I will neither love you, nor trust you; however thy sin may please thee, whatever it may promise thee, be sure thou wilt find it a sting in thy soul, and a stain upon thy glory.

Keep your selves from the sins of others, beware of the *leaven* of the proud *Pharisee*, of the formal and vain-glorious *Scribe*, of the extorting *Publican*, of the debauched *Prodigal*, the ambitious *Diotrephes*, the virulent *Tertullus*, the backsliding *Demas*; beware of all *Epidemical Leaven*, the sickness of the times you may live in: Take heed lest you be drawn away with the errors of the wicked, and so swimming down the stream, you fall from your own steadfastness. Let sinners come up to you, go not you down to them.

Let them never say of any of you, *The man is become as one of us, our spot is become the spot of his children.* Let your lives be a rebuke to the ungodly World, whilst you live as the children of God, without rebuke in the midst of the World.

2. In its *Power* : let the power of *Grace* be seen, in its preserving its self in its being, & vigorous exercise against all the powers of Hell : The strength of a man is seen in this, that he can bear wind and weather, can live any where without impairing his health : The strength and metal of a Sword is seen in this, that Iron will not turn its edge. True *Grace* is such a Plant, that all the weeds of the Field, and thorns of the Forrest, are not able to choke ; that will endure not only the Summers heat, but the Winters Frosts.

Christians, prove your *Grace* to be a right plant, the right seed, the seed of God, let it bear up against all the world ; Let not the *winds of persecution*, put out your Light, nor the *waters* cast out of the *Serpents* mouth, quench your love, nor so much as cool your zeal ; especially take heed that the *Dragons Tail* do not draw you down amongst the *falling Stars*. You know what a world you live in ; You know the old quarrel betwixt the *seed* of the *Woman* and the *Serpent*, both what it is, and that it hath been kept on foot through all Ages to this day.

You know the [*White*] at which *Satan* and all his *Archers*, have been so long levelling, so hotly discharging ; the *white stone* in your breasts, the *white Robe* on your backs ; A good Conscience, and a holy life, are the mark upon which all the fury of Earth & Hell is spent. Oh now prove your *Grace* to be *Grace*, by its preserving its self against all this violence, Let the Devil see you will be *holy* whether he will or no ; let the evil world see you will be *godly* do what they can ; though they may make you poor, and destitute, and naked, yet let

them despair of ever making you *ungodly*; let Grace hereby appear to be Grace, & the *mighty* power of God in you: which that it may do,

2. Let Grace ripen towards *Glory*; let not the scorching Sun wither your Blossoms, but ripen your fruit. If you would hold out, get you on: If you would not have your *something* to come to *just nothing*, increase your *store*. Let your Spark grow up into a Flame, your Grain of Mustard-seed into a Tree. I tell you a *Mystery*, The tallest Cedars on Gods Mountain, will best escape the wind, whilst the lower shrubs are in greater danger of being overturned; If you will stand sure, get you up on the higher ground.

Christians, befool the Devil, let him see himself a loser by all his stirs he makes against you. It is not the first time that his cross winds have proved the most auspicious gales to put the Saints the sooner into harbour. What he hath intended for a *withering Storm*, hath often proved a *fruitful dew*: those very clouds he expected should *rain down snares*, have often *dropt down fatness*: If you will go on, Hell shall help you forward; the Devils Rods on your back, shall but help to mend your pace; his Thorns shall be Spurs in your sides; by stripping you of your fleshly delights, he shall but starve your lusts, his Friends; his Burthens shall be your Ballast, to make your course more steady: Christians are seldom in such a thriving and prosperous state, as when they are just come out of the hands of a persecuting Devil.

Christians, grow in grace; there's no season but may be a growing season; *Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*: Let that living spring which is broken forth in you, be like the waters of the Sanctuary, *Ezek. 4. 7.* which at their first rising, were up to the ankles, but a little further were

up to the knees, a little further they were up to the loins, and at length they grew up to a great river, waters to swim in, the bottom whereof could not be felt. It may be the waters of Grace do yet run low with thee, a little Bay will stop or turn the stream; thou art yet gotten but to ankle deep, or knee deep, get thee on, stay not till thy Spring become a River; let every day, every duty, every experience, yea, every affliction, add to thy streams; that as the accession of every little Brook to the main Channel, raises the water as it passes along, so it may be with thy soul, that the farther thou goest on, the fuller thy banks may be, till thou comest to be like *Jordan* in the Harvest, whose waters fill its banks. To quicken thee on in this growth in grace, consider,

1. That a little Grace will make but poor work with thy mighty sins; where Grace is low, Lust is high; and how is an Infant like to stand before a Man of War?

2. That a little Grace will not suffice to bear thee up in great afflictions; that which thou maist make a shift with in a calm, will not serve thee in a storm.

3. That a little Grace will be sadly put to it, if ever thou come to have but little means of Grace.

4. That he that hath but little Grace, is like to have no assurance that he hath any at all. If thou wouldest have power over Corruption, if thou wouldest stand in the day of Temptation, if thou wouldest not starve in the day of Famine, if thou wouldest have the comfort of the Grace thou hast, let it grow up to its fuller stature: Grace, when it is come to Age, will speak for it self, and shift for it self the better; which whilst it is in its infancy, neither knows, nor can help it self.

Christians, Let your Grace grow, and let the fruits of it increase: let your fields ripen to the Harvest. I may say concerning sinners, not as our Lord said, *Behold the fields are already white to the Harvest*. But behold, the

Fields are already *black* to the Harvest. The Word is ready to be given, *Come, put in thy Sickle, the Harvest is ripe, the wickedness is great.* The Fields of Tares are already black to the Harvest, but oh when shall it be said of you, *Behold the Fields are white to the Harvest?* shall evil weeds grow so fast, and shall only the good Corn be at a stand?

Brethren, Let your fruits grow more *plentiful*, and more *perfect* daily, let that Scripture be verified in you, *Prov. 8. 14. The path of the just is a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.* Let your hearts be so filled with the fulness of God, that your paths may drop fatness. Let it be said of you, as of the Spouse, *Cant. 4. 18. and chap. 5. 5. Her lips dropped as the Honey comb, and her hands dropped sweet smelling Myrrh.* Let your lips drop as the Honey-comb; as you have drunk in the Milk and Honey that comes down from above, so be ever dropping it down to others. Let something of the fatness, something of the fatness that you have received from above, be always dropping down: Be dropping according to what you have drank, as you see Sinners, of whom it is said, *They drink iniquity,* to be alwayes dropping iniquity, dropping Oaths, dropping Lies, dropping scoffs and reproaches; So let it be said of you, *They drink the dew of Heaven, and this they are dropping down.* Let no Child, no Servant, no Friend come into your company, and go away without some sweet drops from your lips. A word of heavenly instruction, a gracious admonition, a word of encouragement, or a quickning word, let them have: or lift up a prayer, and drop down a blessing upon them. Something or other of the *Dew of Heaven*, let them feel flowing from your lips.

Let your Lips drop as the Honey-comb, & your hands
drop

drop sweet smelling Myrrb. Let your holy practises, your holy examples, second, and let on your wholsom counsels and instructions. Let your words be savoury, and your works be gracious: Let lip and life speak the same things, and lead on the same way.

Christians, by your nursing up the souls and fruits of others, you will ripen and encrease your own. If you should look on all the fruit as little, which your selves have brought forth to God, you will have this to comfort you, *That you have born more upon your Brethrens knees*; the fruits of those fields which you have planted or watered, will abound to your account.

Bring forth much fruit unto God, and be much in *immediate converse* with God, *Phil. 3. 20. Our conversation is in Heaven.* Be more elevated and raised in your Spirits daily, above things sensual and carnal.

Above Carnal delights.

Above Carnal discouragements.

1. Above *Carnal delights* : live more purely in the Spirit; let your hearts be wrought up to such a spiritual frame, that all the joys, pleasures and comforts of your lives may be spiritual. Let the Lord be all your delight, *Psal. 37. 5.* Let it be with you as much as may be, as it is with the Saints already in glory, to whom *God is all*, who being changed into his image, and dwelling in his presence, are satisfied in him. Let *God alone* be as much to you, as *God and all the world.* Let the fashions, and pleasures, and delights of this world, be so much beneath your Spirits, that it may neither be an abatement of your joy, to want; nor an addition to your Content to possess them. Let the light of all these lower sparks be swallowed up in God; when the Sun shines, all the Stars disappear, and are not needed.

List

Lift up thine eyes, Christian, and see what pleasures there are *within the veil*: Come, drink thy fill of this new wine, let thy Faith draw the Curtains of Eternity, and take a view of those heights and depths, and lengths and breadths of that glory and joy, which there it may discover. Look on him that *sits on the Throne*, and those everlasting treasures of Light, Holiness, Goodness and Mercy, which are streaming from his face, on those overflowing bowels of kindness and compassion, on those Rivers of pure and eternal Pleasures, Rest and Peace, that rise from that glorious Throne, and run through the City of God. Behold the *Trees of Life*, and feed thy soul on its precious fruit, whose very leaves are for the healing of Nations. Harken to, and fill thine ears and heart with those triumphs and exaltations, those raptures and extasies of unspeakable and glorious joyes, those blessings and praises, those Hallelujahs that are turned upon the hearts and tongues of the *Heavenly Choir*, the glorious Angels, *and the Spirits of just men, made perfect*, by the vision and fruition of thy God, the God of glory.

Look on, and possess this joy and glory; say to thy soul as God to *Abraham*, Gen. 13. 14. *Lift up thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, Northward, and Southward, and Eastward, and Westward*, through all the Coasts, and all the Dimensions of the blessed Land of Promise, and holy City; and then say, *Come soul, take up thy rest here, all this is thine.*

Look and love, love and long, long and hope, hope and rejoyce in hope of this glory of God. Look on thy God, and never leave looking, till thou art changed into his image, and satisfied with his image. And here let thy delight and thy dwelling be.

2. Above all carnal discouragements, from any adversaries, or dangers, wherewith thou art baited and affrighted,

frighted, as you walk in the *Lord*, let the joy of the *Lord* be your strength, let your Sun be your shield, let your hope be your confidence, and fear not your duty nor danger. Look to your hope, and you will laugh at fear. Dwell in your *deward*, and you will not be afraid to dwell in your duty : But of this a word more by and by. Thus much for general directions.

2. I shall next give you some special directions for your daily work.

Generals necessarily depend on, & subsist in particulars. As there can be no Religion in a Kingdom, unless it be first in particular Families; nor none in Families, unless it be in particular persons; so a general course of Christianity there cannot be, unless it be supported in our particular daily walk.

The advice I am giving you, I have in part borrowed for your use, which some of you may possibly have received elsewhere.

Before I give you the particular directions. I shall first premise these things :

1. Count upon this, that the directions I am now giving you, (if you ever mean to bring it to any thing) will cost you pains and labour : and how can you count your selves Christians, if you refuse to be at the necessary cost of Christianity ? if you think to be Christians without labour, or if you will stand out from Christianity, to save your labour, you are alike wise in both. Either come to a resolution to fall upon an industrious painful life, or 'twill be in vain to give you counsel.

2. Practise the directions I shall give you in pursuance of your Covenant with God, wherein you have engaged to take the strictest severest Laws of Christ, for the Rule of your life. What I am pressing on you, for the matter of it, is no more than you have bound your selves to as Christians. Remember your bonds, and let

let this holy practice be followed on by you, as the paying your vows. Remember daily the vows of God are upon you, and there is not any material thing here prescribed to you, which falls not under your vows. Your Covenant, if your eye be much upon it, will be a cord to hold you to your work.

3. Press hard for sensible communion with God in all your duties.

4. Keep up a spiritual and holy frame from Duty to Duty. Remember what I have elsewhere spoken to you more at large, on these two particulars. See that there be Religion in your duties, and confine not Religion to your duties.

5. Be watchful: The life of all Religion lies much here, whatever you resolve upon, will come to nothing without it. Watchfulness is the Executioner of your will. Let your eye be upon your Rule, and your Work. Especially watch against your *prevailing sins*. There's no Christian that observes himself, but may find some one sin or more, that in regard of their power over him, are taller by the head and shoulders than all the rest. In some *Pride*, in others *Worldliness*, in others *Passion*, in others *Slothfulness*. It may be, if thou searchest, some one of these four, or possibly some other may be it, that by a specialty thou maist call [*thine iniquity*.] Find out what it is, & know, that there thy main work lies. In vain wilt thou strive in other duties, till that which hinders, be removed out of the way. *Fight neither against small or great, but against the King of Israel*. Where the Enemy most ordinarily makes his breach upon thee, set the stronger Guard. Let thy daily conflicts be here, and observe diligently with what success.

6. Walk on thy course in the name and strength of the Lord Jesus, live by Faith, depend on Christ for the assistance of his mighty Spirit. Forget not this, for otherwise thou wilt go but lamely on. These

These things premised, I shall now give you the particular directions.

1. Directions for the Evening.

Every Evening before you sleep, withdraw yourselves from the World, and having set your hearts as in the presence of God, charge them before God, to answer to these following interrogatories.

1. Concerning your Duties.

Q. 1. Did not God find me on my bed, when he expected me on my knees.

2. Was there not more of Custom and Fashion, than Conscience and Affection, either in my secret or Family duties?

3. Had I any sensible Communion with God in my duties?

4. Have I not neglected, or been careless and overly in reading the Word, and holy Meditations?

2. Concerning your Sins.

Q. 1. Do I live in nothing that I know to be a sin?

2. Have I kept me from mine iniquity? What victory have I yet gotten over it?

3. Am I a mourner for mine own, and the sins of the Land?

3. Concerning your Temptations.

Q. 1. Have I feared, watched against, and not run into temptation?

2. What temptations have I overcome this day?

3. Have I had a care of my company?

4. Concerning your Heart.

Q. 1. Have I held mine heart in a serious spiritual, gracious frame? Have my calls to duty ever found me in a preparation to duty?

2. Hath the Lord been ever before mine eyes, and Eternity upon my heart?

3. Have I been much in holy Ejaculations?

4. Have

4. Have I not given liberty to the workings of Pride, sinful Anger, Discontent, or Impatience ?

5. Have I made conscience of evil thoughts ?

5. Concerning Conscience.

Q. 1. Hath my Conscience neither been blind, nor dumb, nor my heart deaf or head-strong against it.

2. Have I done nothing against, nor with a doubting Conscience ?

3. Have I neither defiled mine own, nor wittingly scandalized my Brothers Conscience ?

6. Concerning your Tongue.

Q. 1. Have I bridled my Tongue ?

2. Have I spoken evil of no man ?

3. Hath the Law of the Lord been in my mouth, as I sat in my house, or went by the way, as I was lying down, and rising up ?

7. Concerning your Talents.

Q. 1. Have I not wasted or vainly spent any part of my Estate ? hath neither my Pride had a snare, nor my Appetite more than its share ?

2. Have I not sent Christ away without an Alms when I had it by me ?

3. Have I redeemed my time from

Needless Visits,

Idle imaginations,

Fruitless discourse, and

Unnecessary sleep ?

4. Have I not lost an opportunity this day, of doing or receiving good ? Have I not neglected to exhort or reprove, when occasion hath been given ? and if I have been reprov'd, how have I born it ?

8. Concerning your Tables.

Q. 1. Did I not sit down with no higher ends than a Beast, only to please my appetite ? Did I eat and drink to the glory of God ?

2. Did

2. Did I not eat or drink to excess ?

3. Did I not rise from the Table without letting fall any thing of God there ?

4. Did I not mock God, when I pretended to crave a Blessing, or return Thanks ?

9. Concerning your Calling.

Q. 1. Have I been serving the Lord this day, in my particular Calling ?

2. Have I not been idle ?

3. Have I not over-eagerly minded my earthly affairs ?

4. Have I defrauded no man, wronged no man ?

5. Have I dropped never a lye, nor broken my promise in all my dealings ?

10. Concerning your Relations.

Q. 1. Have I faithfully discharged, and done nothing against my duty to my Relations ? have I behaved my self as a Christian, Husband and Wife, Parent and Child, Master and Servant ?

11. Concerning your carriage to those within.

Q. Have I carried my self towards all Saints.

1. Lovingly,

Delighting in them,

Bearing with them,

Covering their infirmities.

2. Peaceably, not provoking them to envy.

3. Profitably, provoking them to love and good works ?

12. Concerning your carriage to those without.

Q. Have I carried my self to those without,

1. Wisely, that they have not been a snare to me, nor I through my fault become a prey unto them ?

2. Inoffensively, have I not been a stumbling block to them ?

3. Cour-

3. Courteously and compassionately; that I might the better win upon them?

3. Concerning Providences.

Q. 1. Have I diligently observed all the remarkable Providences of God towards me, especially such as have come in as returns of Prayer?

2. Have I been thankful for my daily mercies?

3. How have I born this dayes crosses?

14. Concerning the use of your liberty.

Q. Have I kept my self far enough within my bounds?

In Sum :

Q. 1. What have I done for God or my soul this day? have I not lost one day more?

2. Have I led this day a diligent, watchful, self-denying life?

Direction for the Morning.

1. If through necessity or carelessness, you have omitted the reading and weighing these Questions in the Evening, be sure to do it now.

2. Ask thy self, What sins have I committed? What duties have I omitted? Against which of these Rules have I offended the day fore-going? And renew thy repentance, and double thy watch.

3. Examine whether God were first and last in thy thoughts, Morning and Evening.

4. Be careful to set thine ends right, for all the day.

An Advertisement

If you want time to make daily enquiry upon every one of the forementioned particulars, (they being so many) let a mark upon, or write out such of them, as most especially concern your case, and let them not be forgotten. Think not thy self excused from this course, because 'tis too long; when, if need be, thou maist thus make it shorter: Better cut short than wholly give out.

For the help of the weaker, I shall gather out these few of the chief Interrogatories, which when they are straitned for time, they may only use; and to which they may add more, as they have occasion and opportunity.

2. 1. Was I serious, and had I any sensible Communion with God, this day, in my secret and Family duties?

2. Hath it been my care to keep mine heart in an holy frame, from duty to duty?

3. Have I been much in holy Ejaculations?

4. Have I not given liberty to the working of pride, sinful anger, discontent, or impatience; nor so much as to vain thoughts?

5. Have I not inordinately minded earthly things?

6. Have I kept me from *mine* iniquity, and not lived in any known sin?

7. Have I wronged no man in word nor deed?

8. Have I been temperate and self-denying in the use of the Creatures?

9. Hath the Law of the Lord been much in my mouth?

10. Have I not sent Christ away without an Alms, when I had it by me?

11. Have I not lost an opportunity of doing or receiving good?

12. Have I not neglected nor done any thing against my duty to my Relation?

13. What have I don for God or my soul this day? have I not lost one day more?

14. Have I been diligent and watchful?

Christians, here is a course prescribed, which by the ordinary assistance, which the Lord doth not deny, you may take up if you will; and which if you conscientiously observe, will be, without doubt, through the blessing of God attended with great success. And those that do not take up this course, or some other equivalent to it, let them never think to ease their hearts by idle complaints, I cannot attain to such a holy, even fruitful, heavenly life, as I desire; I would, but I cannot; God will abhor such lazie complaints, and look upon them as they are, a meer device to keep you quiet under a sloathful heart.

Set your whole Duty daily before *your eyes*, charge it upon your hearts, take an account of your selves how you discharge it; set upon it as that which is no other than you have vowed to the Lord; commit your selves and your wayes to him for succour; and if this doth not mightily conduce to advance you in point of holiness, and establish you in point of peace, then say, that both the Precepts and Promises of the Gospel have deceived you.

And thus I have set before you that holy conversation which becometh the Gospel. Take up this holy course, let this be your life you mean to lead, and let it be carried on.

In an holy Union.

In an united Contention.

In an Holy boldness.

1. In an holy Union: So the Apostle there adds, *stand fast in one spirit, with one mind.* Never look to thrive in Grace, if you do not live in peace. The decays of Christianity, lie much upon the score of the divisions of Christians. The Devil hath also taken up that Maxime. *Divide & Impera*, rent them, and ruine them. The reason why our Love is so cold, is because our differences are so hot. The reason of so little zeal against sin, hath been the great strife among Brethren. The combinations of Sinners have not so much prejudiced the power of holiness, as the contentions of Saints. There are not a few who go under the name of Saints, that have maintained disputes about Religion so long, till they have disputed themselves out of all Religion; their searching for truth, hath been the loss of both love and life.

Christians, If ever you would be any thing, be one; be of one heart, of one mind, *holding the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* It were greatly to be desired, That the people of God were both of *one heart*, and of *one way*: But if this may not be, if there cannot be *Uniformity*, yet let there be *Unity* betwixt all that fear the Lord in truth.

A few words I shall leave with you for your direction herein.

1. Divide not from the Head, to unite with any pretended Members; hold not with them that hold not with the Head. Sell not Truth, clear, fundamental truth, to buy Peace.

2. Divide not from real Members, lest you hereby prove your division from the Head. Christ hath but one body, if you be not in union with the body, you are divided from the Head,

3. See the Head in every Member, see Christ in every Saint.

4. Prize Christ where ever you see him. Love Christ, and love his *Image*; if you will not slight Christ, slight not any Saint. Seest thou an humble, meek, patient, broken-hearted; self-denying, mortified Christian; in whatsoever displeasing form (as to matters circumstantial) he appears, despise him not, reject him not.

5. Prize Peace and Union, as the strength and honour of the body.

6. Pursue Peace and Union, with the utmost strength of thy soul. And that you may obtain it,

1. Let all parties that are named of Christ, *be humbled* under former divisions. What peace so long as God is angry? Oh how have we provoked the Lord, by provoking one another! Let him only who hath been without sin in this matter, be without sorrow and shame.

Sure they are hard hearts, who are not broken under such breaches. Let us not mistake our selves, nor mis-call that zeal for God, which God will call pride and peevishness.

I speak not against our being offended, either with error or iniquity; we may not call evil good, or darkness light, for peace sake; but at our unreasonable passions, against whom we suppose erring Brethren.

If the reproach of the Gospel, the hardning of the perverse, the stumbling of the weak, if the hindering of Edification, the promoting of confusion, and every evil work, which have been the sad *effects* of our divisions; if Pride and Haughtiness, if Vanity and Wantonness, if Envy and Uncharitableness, which have been the *womb* from which our contentions have sprung, be matter of humiliation, then sure we had need be brought upon our knees: we must be melted ere we can be moulded up into one.

2. Let

2. Let all parties unite sincerely in *their ends* : Let the honour of Christ, the advancement of practical godliness, the destruction of the interest of the flesh, the edification of the whole body in faith and holiness, be looked at with a single eye, & pursued with a plain and honest heart ; let not the interest of a party, the affection of superiority and dominion, the carrying on of selfish or fleshly designs ; let the *God* or the *Christ* you are driving for, unbias your spirits ; take the right mark, and let your motions be sincerely levelled at it. If we were once set right in our ends, an accommodation of all our differences about the means, would be more facile and feasible, *Prov. 11. 3, 5. The integrity of the upright shall guide him, the uprightness of the perfect shall direct his way.* Humble, single, honest hearts, are most like to hit upon the good and honest way : If we had nothing to do but to please the Lord, we should not have much to do to please one another,

3. Let all parties unite in this Rule, *Do as you would be done by* ; that is, as being well informed, and advised, and freed from evil, and discomposed affections, (for so the Rule is to be understood) you would that men should do unto you : Allow to others what you challenge to your selves ; or would, if you were in their circumstances : Deny not what you would demand : The same liberty, the same charity that you would expect from other Christians, allow to them.

4. No longer tie up Christ to a party, say not, *Lo here is Christ, and not there* : Say of all Believers, though of different forms, *As we are Christs, so they are Christs.* Of all the sub-divisions of *Protestants* that are considerable amongst us, there's no party, the union with which makes us, or the separation from which unmakes us *Christians*. We had need to have more to shew for our Christianity

than that we are *Presbyterians, Independants, Anabaptists, Episcopals* or *Erastians*; and the Devil must have more to prove us no Christians, than this, that we are in union with either of these, or in separation from them.

5. In matters circumstantial, be not over hasty in stamping a *Jus divinum* on things disputable and doubtful: Put no more weight, nor a greater necessity on any thing, than God hath evidently put on it; and spend no more of your zeal about it, than is proportionable to its weight and evidence.

6. Allow for the imperfect state the Church is in, we know but in part; & till that which is perfect is come & that which is imperfect is done away, we must bear with one another, if in any things we be otherwise minded.

7. Stretch not your Authority *beyond your Line*; take not too much upon you, think not to bring all others, in every thing, to your Standard, impose not your Consciences as a Law upon others,

8. Put not Conscience to the ill Office of being a meer *Make-bate*; catch not up every notion, and presently charge it upon Conscience, as that which must be maintained, though to the greatest prejudice of the whole interest of Religion, and so rent and run away from all those that agree not with you. Be not rash, be not heady, be tender, but be wary; be well instructed, if you will be truly tender; first carefully inform thy Conscience, and then peaceably follow it.

Of what is that Conscience tender, that is not tender of making wounds and rents in the body of Christ?

9. Beware of *Censurings* and *Judgings*, of biting and devouring one another. *If ye bite and devour one another, ye shall be consumed one of another.* Let him that is without fault, cast the first stone at his erring Brother. Be not bitter against the bitterness of others: if others some ways offend thee, yet let it not leaven thee: Be not reviled

reviled into a Reviler, scoffed into a scoffer ; overcome evil with goodness: 'Tis not seldom that our invectives against others bitterness, are more keen and cutting than that we complain of : Justifie not what thou judgest : Practise not thy self, what in the same breath thou condemnest in thy *Brethren* : Throw not back thy *Brothers* Fire-balls in his Face, lest in censuring him, thou be also thine own Iudg : Pursue not matters in difference over hotly, but learn modestly and meekly to differ, where you cannot agree.

10. Let your conversation be so holy, humble, and heavenly, carry your selves in such simplicity and godly sincerity towards God, towards one another, and towards all men, that you may command each other to believe, that however you agree not about your *Mother*, yet you are all the children of the same *Father*; that you are of God ; and that the spirit of the living God dwelleth in you.

11. Hold *communion* in the things wherein you agree, and *charity* where you differ: May you not pray, & fast and hear, and hold *Christian conferences* together ? Sure there is not over much of Gospel-Spirit, where this will not be granted ?

12. Impose not on each other any hard and unnecessary *conditions* of your *communion*. Suppose, upon your differing Judgments, there be in some things different practices, which some of you judge less warrantable, whilst the Consciences of others allow and use ; press not the relinquishing such questionable practices, as the *condition of your communion* ; especially, if they be not mingled with the duties wherein you joyn, but are used by any of you, at other times, or in other assemblies. Excommunicate not them from you, excommunicate not your selves from them with whom *Christ holds communion*. Judge not that Christ withdraws from all those

who are not in every thing of your mind and way. Destroy not all communion, by seeking after a purer, than in this our imperfect state, we shall ever attain. According to this principle, (no communion at all, if not in all) where shall we rest? In all Societies something will offend.

13. And lastly, In your communion receive not one another to *doubtful Disputations*. Let your *Prayers, Conferences*, and all *holy Exercises*, be *studiously* so managed, that there may be a sweet accord of your Spirits therein: Come not together to strengthen Parties, or propagate Opinions, Let all matters of controverſie be waved; and hereof let there be such a mutual assurance given beforehand, that you may be together, without fear of becoming thorns or snares one to another: Which, if it be not unanimously consented to, and inviolably observed, your Communion will be impossible, or dangerous.

Christians, Are the clear and fundamental truths of the Gospel, and the more necessary and weighty duties of Religion, sufficiently understood and practised? Are your souls safe? is your Calling and Election sure? Is the love, and life, and zeal of God grown up to that maturity, that you need not mutual help this way? Have you any spare time from those things, to spend in perplexing controversies? Build up one another in your most *Holy Faith*, provoke one another to love, and to good works, encourage, establish, and strengthen one another in the known ways of holiness, and if you find not this both better work, and work enough for you, then take your liberty.

These things do, live in peace, and love, and the God of peace shall be with you.

Hear,

Hear, O all ye friends of Christ, by what oblique Names soever unhappily distinguished ! will you come and be friends one with another ? Are you for peace ? Your God is the *God of peace* : Your Jesus is the *Prince of peace* : Your Gospel is the *Gospel of peace* : and will you not be perswaded to be *Sons of peace* ? Your God is one, your Mediator is one, your Faith one, your Baptism one, your Hope one ; you are one Body, one Spirit, and will you not yet be one soul ?

Oh how hopeful would our condition be, were our hearts generally set upon peace ! We should certainly obtain, did we more resolvedly pursue it : and what should hinder ? have you not yet enough of your contentions, and quarrellings ; have not your souls been sufficiently neglected, your Lusts strengthened, your Faith weakned, your Love withered, your comfortors wasted, your Names blemished, your holy Profession blamed ? Ha ! not your God been sufficiently provoked, and the Devil sufficiently gratified ? are your bellies so filled with gall, and your mouths with gravel, and have you not yet enough of your contentions ?

Christians, Slight not these Counsels and Warnings ; As you would prove your selves the Friends of Christ, be ye followers of Peace. Study, O study these things that make for peace. *Follow peace with all men, as much as in you is* but especially with the household of Faith *Let there be no longer strife betwixt us, for we are Brethren.*

Yet always remember, I am pressing you to an holy Union : Whilest I Perswade you to follow peace, I must still add [*and holiness* :] I perswade you not to pursue *Peace*, upon terms dishonourable or prejudicial to *Truth* ; They must have both together, that will be blessed in either : Truth without Peace is as a Jewel without its Cabinet ; Peace without Truth, is as a Cabinet with-

with nothing in it. Peace without holiness, is as a fair and promising shell, with a rotten or worm-eaten kernel ; holiness without peace, is as a precious kernel under a crack'd and broken shell.

They that have peace without truth, have nothing worth the securing. They that have truth without peace have little security for what they have. Peace without truth, is beauty without worth : Truth without peace, is worth with its beauty marred. Let both go together, and then they will be, both the *Columna Ecclesie*, the Pillar of the Church, rendring it consistent within it self : and the *Corona Ecclesie*, its Crown, rendring it comely and glorious before the world.

Be it thus with us, and then Satan look to thy self, thy Kingdom shall down again ; when thou canst no longer hold up *division*, thou lovest thy *dominion*. Then Saints lift up your heads, your communion shall be sweet, your glory shall be great, your light shall shine, your fruit shall abound, the smell of your spices shall flow forth ; your adversaries shall envy, and your King shall greatly delight to see your beauty. Oh ! may this Grace, this Peace be granted us from the Lord ; and let all that love the prosperity of *Sion*, say *Amen*.

2. In an *united contention*. *Striving together* (saith the apostle) for the *Faith of the Gospel*. Unite, but strive ; strive not one against another, Christian against Christian, but strive together, let your *contention* be in *communion*. *Strive together against sin* and unbelief, against hypocrisie and earthliness, strive against strife and debate, and envyings and judgings ; *strive together with God* in your prayers and supplications : We often pray, but our prayers do not agree ; by keeping at such distance, we know not one anothers hearts, and are *so many men, so many minds* ; every one prays according to his single apprehensions and affections: what one prays,

prayer, another unprayer; inſomuch that we ſhould put the Lord to do contradictions, if he muſt give particular answers to all our prayers. And poſſibly that may be the reaſon why the Lord deſers his answers ſo long, he will ſtay till we are better agreed what we would have, *Mat. 18. 19. If two of you agree on earth, touching any thing that they ſhall ask, it ſhall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven.* Scrive together in all holy and united endeavours, to comfort, confirm and eſtabliſh one another in the faith of the Goſpel. Keep up the Communion of Saints, and an united contention againſt ſin and unbelief: Remember, *Heb. 10 25.*

3. In an holy boldneſs, in nothing terrified by your adverſaries. In nothing, that is, either in no degree, not at all terrified; or elſe in nothing that you have to do, be frighted out of no part of your duty: or elſe at nothing that they do, or threaten to do againſt you. Be not afraid to be holy. Tell your adverſaries, when they have ſaid and done their worſt, you muſt, and you will make bold to ſerve your God. Fear them not, and they cannot hurt you; they never hurt you, unleſs they divert you from your duty.

To eſtabliſh your hearts in this holy boldneſs, and againſt your carnal fears,

1. Conſider, That

1. By how much the more you fear God, by ſo much the leſs you will fear men.

2. By how much the more you fear ſin, by ſo much the leſs you will fear trouble.

3. By how much the leſs your adverſaries fear God, by ſo much the leſs need you to fear them.

2. Believe, *Pſal. 27. 13. I had fainted, but that I believed.* Faith is a buckler againſt fears and faintings, *Eph. 6. 16. Above all, take the ſhield of Faith, whereby you ſhall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the Devil.*

[The

[*The shield of Faith*] A shield is a wall of partition, interposed betwixt a person and harm ; 'Tis only our apprehensions of harm that raise our fear ; Faith will save a Christian harmless, and thereby preserve him fearless. The shield is ordained for a security to all parts, and against all assaults. Some pieces of our armour are appropriated to one part only ; the Helmet is for the Head, the Breast-plate for the Breast, the Girdle for the Loins, the Shoes for the feet ; but the Shield is a moveable, that is to be lifted up, where ever the blow comes Faith is an universal security.

Faith may be said to be a Shield.

1. Instrumentally ; As it provides us of a Shield, as it lifts up a Shield, and sets a guard upon the soul to secure it. It holds up Christ for a Shield, it holds up the *Promises* for a Shield, the very *Commands and Institutions* of God, for a Shield and safe-guard to the soul.

Sometimes the *sense of guilt* assails, and weakens the heart ; it is not so much any thing without us, as something within us, that raises our fears. How small a matter will fright a guilty soul ? Guilt will make every stroke a stab ; it's the barb of the arrow, the venom on the dart, or the sore of the heart, that makes every stroke formidable and terrible. 'Tis the guiltless soul that hath courage and boldness. *Hic murus abentus est*---Now against this dreadful dart, Faith holds up a Buckler with a *Crucified Jesus* upon it, and so that's quenched.

Sometimes *darkness* and uncertainties about the way that we are in, raises our fear. A Christian that knows himself in his duty, in his way, is out of fear. Clearness gives boldness. Whilst we question the warrantableness of the way we are in, every shadow of danger will shake us : Against such fears, Faith holds up a Buckler with this inscription, *Have not I commanded thee* ; It shews the command, and in that, our warrant, and in our warrant our security.

When

When we question whether our *Worship*, for which we are like to suffer, be right or no, Faith holds up an *institution* for our shield.

If this fear (O I shall not hold out, I shall deny my Lord, and his Faith, if put to it) assails the soul; here Faith holds up the *Promise* for a Buckler *He hath said, I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee: so that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper.*

2. Formally; Faith not only lifts up a Shield, but is our shield; The very beleiving in a crucified Jesus, the very beleiving the Command, the Justification, the promise, staves and supports the heart, against whatsoever may befall it; *I had fainted but that I believed.*

Christians, whatever your duties, difficulties, despondences, straits, temptations, afflictions, weaknesses are; believe, and you shall be carried through; believe, and you shall be established; believe in Christ, and you shall dare to follow Christ; believe in Christ, and you shall go through with Christ, and hold out to the end: believe and you shall neither fear, faint, nor fall. Your Faith will both keep you *faultless*, and save you *harmless*; and thereby secure you from sinking and fainting in your minds.

If this be not enough, let me add, that Faith will yet farther scatter all your fears, by this double Act.

1. It will put your reward into your hands.

2. It will put all your troubles to a present end.

1. It will put your reward into your hand; it will set the Crown on your head, even whilst the Cross is on your back. Faith makes things to come present, *Heb. 11. 1.* It is the substance, or being of things hoped for; it gives being to the good things promised, before they are. Hope carries the eye to the object, looks on things to come, as come; Faith brings the object to the eye, looks on things to come,

come, as come ; it looks on distance of time, as God looks on it, on a thousand years but as one day. It looks on Gods *saying* and *doing*, on Gods promising and performing, as all one : it anticipates Glory, and gives a kind of present possession of it in hand, *Rom. 8. (In) all these things we are more then Conquerours : in Tribulation, in Persecution, in Famine; in Nakedness, (In) all these things we are more then Conquerours :* Not only afterwards we shall be, but in all these things, even whilst we are under them, we are more than Conquerours. The conquest is obtained in the very entrance of the Combat, *This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our Faith.* Believe Christian, and thy *Faith* will be thy *Victory*, thy *Shield* will be thy *Palm*.

2. It will put all our troubles to a *present end* : Faith looks on things to come, as present ; and thereby on things present, as past : it looks on all things according as they will be in their issue and end : it looks on things to come, according to what they will be when they are come : it looks on things present according to what they will be when they are past : it sees all passing, and considers it as past already : it sees all passing, the world upon its wing, the fashion of it passeth away : it sees the *riches* of the World upon their wings ; the *Pride* and the *Pomp*, and the *Gallantry*, and the *Glory* of the World upon their wings : And it sees the *poverty* of the World, the *Troubles* of the World, all upon the wing. It looks on the *blackest clouds*, as *flying clouds*, and it considers all as gone already : it looks on the clear, that is, beyond the Clouds ; it says as God says, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen* : Not only it shall fall, but it is fallen, and shall not be able to rise.

And what place can there then be left for fear or fainting ? was the Red Sea a *terror* to *Israel*, when they saw themselves gotten to the other side ? Did *Sampsons* dead

dead Lion fright him? Will the remembrance of what you *have* suffered, be a terrour to you when you are gotten through, and are come out of Tribulation? Why open the eye of your Faith, and see the Coast already clear? You will see the Red Sea behind you, the Wilderness behind you, *Jordan* behind you, and your selves gotten safe on the banks of *Canaan*.

Come on soul, what should hinder thee? May be thou supposest, thou hast a great fight of affliction to endure; grant thou hast, yet fear none of those things *thou shalt* suffer, till thou canst fear those things thou *hast* suffered. Though thou be now putting on thy Armour, believe and thou maist boast as if thou hadst put it off: *Death where is thy sting? Grave where is thy victory? Where is thy fury of the Oppressor?* Thine enemies are already under thy feet, man: Death it self is swallowed up in victory.

Christians, Cherish, improve, increase your Faith, and this will clear your way of all your fears. Wherefore didst thou doubt, O thou of little faith? O 'tis a sign our Faith is but low, when our fears are so high. The day the Lord hears you in this prayer, *Lord increase our Faith*, he delivers you from your fears: Wax strong in Faith, and you will wax bold in your God.

3. Be humble; 'twill be your advantage, that you stand on the lower ground; he whose heart hath already laid him in the dust, will not fear how low his Enemies can lay him.

4. Be peaceable; your *Preces & Lachryma* will be your best weapons; the guilt of your unquiet and unwarrantable resistance, will weaken your hearts more than all your partakers will strengthen your hands, *Prov. 20. 22. Say not, I will recompence evil, wait on the Lord, and he will save thee.* Patient and peaceable suffering, will be the best way to abash your persecutors, and embolden your souls.

Now

Now gather up all these particulars, and you have the conversation that becometh the Gospel; wherein, that I may perswade, as well as direct you, consider these following *Arguments*.

2. This is to them, to your adversaries, *an evident token of perdition*, this united, humble, peaceable, unanimous boldness in your holy course, whereby you walk in the Spirit and power of the Gospel, and are not frightened or terrified out of it; this is, and will be to your Persecutors, *an evident token of perdition*. The falls and flaws in the lives of Saints, and their *Quarrellings* and *Divisions* amongst themselves, do strengthen the hands and the confidence of sinners against them: The fears and faintings of Saints, are the flushings of Sinners; when Saints hang the wing, sinners lift up the head.

The Majesty and beauty of an holy life, joyned with an humble and patient magnanimity and undantedness will be a dart in the Liver of the enemies of it. It is *an evident token* [to them] *of perdition*: it is not only a Death-token [upon them,] *Persecution* is a black mark of a *son of perdition*: but it is an *evident token* (unto them:) it will read them their doom, it will make their own hearts to fall upon themselves, and their own consciences to give them their sentence.

2. This is to you an *evident token of salvation*, (but to you of salvation) the word is sure. *To him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I shew the salvation of God. If we be dead with Christ, we shall also live with him; if we suffer with him, we shall also be glorified together with him. To him that overcometh, will I give to sit with me on my Throne, even as I have overcome, and am set down with my Father on his Throne. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer. Be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.*

(Salva-

[Salvation, and that of God] there's much in that addition [and that of God] it notes, that the salvation of the suffering Saints shall be, 1. Sure. 2. Great.

1. It notes, that their salvation shall be *sure*: You shall certainly be saved, for God hath undertaken for it, that's the import of the expression: If it be God that justifies, who shall condemn? If it be God that will save, who shall destroy? The matter is sure, you shall be saved, and that of God. It may be Satan will promise, *Hearken to me, and I will save you harmles*. But he is a Liar and a Deceiver; he is weak, and cannot, false, and will not. It may be the evil World will tell you, *If thou wilt cast in thy lot with us, take our advice, follow our example, come along with us, thou mayest save thy self all this harm and loss*. But there is as much trust to the Children, as to the Father of Lies: But if the Lord God, the God of Power, the God of Truth, says, *I will save, who will say nay?*

2. It notes, that their salvation shall be *great*: The great God will do for them great things; He will save them by a *mighty salvation*; He will save them against all those *mighty hindrances* that lie in the way; *Who art thou, O great Mountain! before Zerubbabel, thou shalt become a Plain*. All the difficulties, and unlikelihoods, all the astonishing, and flesh *non-plus-ing* Obstacles that stand in the way of their *Redemption*, will be nothing before the mighty God. He will save them from their *mighty sins*, *sufferings* and *fears*; from the vanity and vexations of this earth, and from the vengeance of eternal fire. *Christians*, Do but go on, walk with Christ, suffer with Christ, & fear none of those things which you shall suffer: & this shall be to you an evident token of salvation, and that of God.

3. Consider again the Argument of the Text: *These things do, and the God of peace shall be with you*. What encouragement there is in this promise, I have already shewed you. Two things I shall only mention here, one of which hath been insisted on already. Hh Con-

Consider, 1. *If God be with you, all shall make for you.*
 2. *If God be with you, you shall shortly be with God.*

3. *If God be with you, all shall make for you: Remember what you have heard out of Rom. 8. 28, 31. Christians, perhaps you will not know how to make a good construction of some providences that may possibly befall you before you die. Such cases there may be, that providence may seem to be a plain contradiction of the Promise. Suppose the people of God in any Nation under heaven, should at any time have not only an inundation of temporal calamities, Famine, and Pestilence, and Sword, Oppression, Rapine, and Cruelty, but a flood of spiritual Judgments also breaking in upon them; a famine of the Word, an eclipse of the light of the glorious Gospel among them; their green Pasture trodden down, their pure Waters pudled, Gods spiritual worship made to give place to Will-worship, Superstition and Idolatry; the Institutions of God, to the inventions of men; his house made an habitation for Dragons, for the Scritch-Owl, and Bittern, for Zim and Jim, and every unclean thing. And that in such a time, when they had given themselves to more than ordinary praying and fasting, and humbling themselves, and repenting of their iniquities; when they had set their faces towards *Sion*, and were full of hopes that the Lord was about to build, and to plant; to cast out their rubbish, to repair their ruines, to bring in their peace like a River, and to establish his Tabernacle amongst them. Suppose that in such a time the Lord should even spit in their faces, should dash all their hopes, and put into their hands a cup of trembling, should bring trouble upon their loyns, and cause darkness to cover their faces; should expose them to scorn and contempt, make them a reproach, and a by-word; should suffer them to be trampled upon as the filth of the World, and the off-scowring of all things. Suppose you should have lived in such times and places,*

& have heard them complaining thus; All things work for good! why we see all things fall out for the worse; so far are our evil things from working for good, that our good things have wrought our hurt. Not only our outward good things, our peace, and our plenty, but our spiritual good things have undone us, our spiritual Liberties and Priviledges, our Ordinances, our Duties, our Prayers, our Fastings, our Zeal for the Lord of Hosts; not only our sins, but our prayers, our repentings, our reformings have undone us. We have prayed and fasted to good purpose; we have even prayed our selves into Poverty, Contempt, Darkness, Confusion, into the snares that have been laid for us, and into the hands of those that hate us. All these things are against us, all our fears are come upon us; all our comforts, yea, & our hopes too are running from us, the whole course of Providence seems to be driven on to our utter ruine; every day every hour, it grows darker & darker, worse & worse, every Spoke of the Wheel, every turn of the wheel renders our condition more helpless & hopeless; our adversaries are become rampant, our soul is filled with their scorn and fury, our friends are as a broken tooth, or a foot out of joynt, our hopes are a Spiders Web, or as the giving up the Ghost; the Almighty causes all his storms and billows to pass over us; one day telleth another, one night certifieth another, and prophecies to us nothing but destruction upon destruction, desolation upon desolation; and where is the promise of his coming? The hope of *Israel* is a sleep, her Saviour is a stranger; the Ark of God is taken, the glory is departed, yea, & God himself seems to be gone over to the camp of the *Philistines*, and marching against us: we have waited for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness; the Harvest is past, the Summer is ended, and we are not saved, neither is there yet any to tell us how long. Suppose you should have stood by, & have seen or heard any such

things any where in the world, would you not have said, *Can any good come out of such a dark Abyss?* out of such a concatenation of so many dreadful and dismal Providences? Why, by what hath been already said, you might have answered thus, stay but a while, till the whole *wheel* be come about, till God hath brough off his work from the *Wheel*; and then you shall see Providence and the Promise meeting together, and kissing each other, and shall be able to say in this case, what *Solomon* did in *Israel*, 1 King. 8. 56. *Blessed be God, that hath given rest to his people Israel, according to all that he promised; there hath not failed (one word) of all his good promise which he promised by the hand of his servants.* Christians, whatever may come upon you at any time while you live in this world, distrust not your God, nor be at all dismayed; you shall see the day, either here or hereafter, and 'twill be never the worse, if it be not till hereafter (take it upon the credit of this word, *All things shall work together for good*) you shall see the day when your hearts shall rejoyce and say, *Oh! 'twas happy for us that matters went so cross with us; 'twas happy we were so poor, and brought so low, and laid in the dark, and strip'd so naked of all that we either took pleasure, or put confidence in: Now we see that the Lord had a more glorious design that he was carrying on for us step by step, by every thing that came upon us, than we were aware of, or could have imagined.* It's true, the *Shimei's* have been cursing, the *Ishmaels* have been mocking, the *Rabshakehs* have been railing, the *Plowers* have been Plowing, the *Hunters* have been pursuing, and had almost overtaken, overcome, and swallowed us up quick; but blessed be our God, that hath not turned our captivity, & saved us by a mighty salvation; but hath done us good by all their mocking and cursing, and raging against us: Now we see there was such light sowing in our dark days; such a peace, a sowing in those deep furrows; such an harvest of joy

joy sowing in the days of your tears, as hath now sprung up into this glory and blessedness. We are beholding to the Devil and his instruments; our Enemies have befriended us, though much against their wills: We could never have shined with such beauty on Earth, had we not been scourged with such unclean wisps; we could never have laid up such treasure in heaven, as by their cursings, and cruel persecutions, our Enemies have laid up for us. So our Lord hath told us, *Great is your reward in heaven*, Mat. 5. 12. *Blessed are you that are persecuted, blessed are you that are reviled for my sake, for righteousness sake for great is your reward in heaven*. It had not been so great, had it not been for our great tribulations: Hell hath given us a life nearer the Throne of Glory. Comfort & encourage your hearts with these words.

3. If God be with you, you shall shortly be with God; *Father I will, that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am: And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to my self, that where I am, ye may be also. If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world. So shall we be ever with the Lord*. Brethren, you that lie among the Pains, 'tis but a little time, and you shall hear that word, *Come up hither, into the Kingdom, the inheritance, prepared for you, There are two Come's, or Calls of our Lord; the first come, is, come and work with me, come and watch with me, come and follow me. The second is, Come and rest with me; your work is done, your watch is over, your race is run, come and enter into my rest. The first come is, Come down with me, from the pride, from the pomps and jollities of this present World; come with me into the wilderness, into the vally of tears, come and suffer with me, come and die with me. The second Come is, Come up with me, up out of the wilderness, up out of your Prisons, up from your*

bonds: your *Jubilee* is come, come up with me: Come put off your prison garments, and put on your robes; shake off your fetters, and take up your palms; lay down your Cross, and take up your Crown: from your prison, to your palace; from the Stocks to the Throne: You that have descended with me, are the same who shall now ascend with me, to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.

The first Come is the *come of a Sinner*; Come, grant me your love; give me your hearts, and accept of mine: This is the Errand upon which his Ambassadors are dispatched; as *Abraham's* servant, to take you as a Wife for your Lord. This is the meaning of all those Jewels, and the Bracelets they bring in their hands; the Lord sends Servant upon Servant, Epistle upon Epistle, Token upon Token, and all speak the same word, Come, come, come away and accept of your Lord, and be married to him. The second come is, the *Come of the Bridegroom*, Come home with me into my holy City, into my Royal Mansion; come into my Chamber, come into my bosom; come and lodg between my breasts, live in my presence, and rest in my love for ever. *Christians*, my business whilest I have been with you, hath been to bring you to God; to espouse you to Christ, & you hath have already, or will yet at last be perswaded to give your consent & will give me leave to make up the match, I can give you assurance, That he will shortly come and make up the Marriage; and must say to you, as *Naomi* to *Ruth*, *Ruth* 3. 10. *Sit still my Daughter, till thou see how the matter will fall; for the man will not be in rest, till he have finished the thing this day.* Sit still *Christians*, till you see how matters will fall, and however they fall, know, your Lord will not be in rest till he have finished this thing, and brought you home to be with him where he is.

I am now parting from you in this confidence, that however, after a few days I shall see your Faces no more

in this world, yet I shall shortly meet you in the Bride-chamber of glory, where we shall ever be with the Lord

Beloved in the Lord, I must now leave you, but give me leave e're I go, to deal freely with you, and yet a little farther, in the close of my day, this once more to open my heart to you, and to tell you,

1. What my parting fears,

2. What my parting wishes for you are, which I carry upon my spirit.

1. My parting fears, I go off from you with, are especially these :

1. I am afraid that there are many of you, upon whom I have bestowed my labour in vain; I am afraid that I have instructed you in vain, exhorted, perswaded, beseeched & reproved you in vain: 'twas the Apostles case, and his fear concerning the *Galatians*, Chap. 4. 11.

It is my grief, that when I would have no more to speak but an healing word, a comforting word, I must yet drop down a bitter word on some of you; that when I would speak only from *Mount Gerizim*, I must yet again speak to some from *Mount Ebal*; that when I would leave a Blessing behind me upon you all, I am like to leave some bound under a Curse. It's grievous to me thus to speak, yet for the discharge of my duty, & for your own necessity, bear with me: I am afraid, that whilst I have been preaching to you, of an incorruptible Crown, of an everlasting Rest, a Kingdom of joy and Glory, I am afraid there are many of you, that have no part nor lot in this matter, but are still in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity. If the Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: And are there none among you, from whom this Gospel is hid? hid as to the light of it, hid as to the saving power and efficacy of it? I am afraid there are too many; I am afraid there's many a blind eye, many an hard heart, many a Spirit still in prison, under the power of their Lusts, & brutish sensuality: I am afraid there are many such a-

mong you, & are not you afraid so to? Oh that you were !

2. I have a greater fear than this; I am afraid of some of you, that not only all my past labours, but this last will be lost also. Those that stand it out to their last day, do usually stand it out in their last day. Blessed be God that there are amongst you, those over whom my soul is comforted: To whom I can speak in the words of the Apostle, *Rom. 6. 16. God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart, that form of Doctrine that hath been delivered unto you; and being now made free from sin, you are become the servants of Righteousness.* Oh that I could thus speak! Oh that I could thus rejoyce over you all! But as the Apostle said to the Corinthians, *2 Cor. 12. 20, I fear lest when I (come) I shall (find) you such as I would not.* So must I say with a greived heart, I fear that now I am going, I shall leave you such as I would not. I would not leave one blind person, one vain person, one loose liver, nor one unbeliever, or impenitent, amongst you all. Oh what a good day would this day of my departure be? what light would there be in this dark evening, were it thus with you? If I might see you all recovered out of the snares of the Devil, every mans eyes opened, every mans Fetters off, every mans Prison broken, and his soul escaped from that deadly bondage: if every poor deadly Creature amongst you, who yet lies bound hand and foot in his Grave-clothes, might now at last stand up from the Dead, and live the life of God, this would be mine and your great rejoycing. But oh! I fear with this Apostle, *2 Cor. 12. 21. My God will humble me, and grieve me, & afflict me, to see in what a woful plight I must leave divers of you.* O ye sons of the Night, you poor, ignorant, and dark souls, upon whom the light hath shined, but your darkness comprehendeth it not: O you poor, obstinate, and hardened souls, upon whom I have been plowing as upon Rocks; and hewing as upon Adamants, who

who still remain under as great hardness, as if in no Dew nor Rain had ever fallen on you. Oh you poor, half-bak'd almost Christians, that have taken up *your stand* in your present Attainments: my soul is under great fears and must weep in secret for you, whilst my tongue must be henceforth silent: Oh every soul, that is without fear of himself, my soul is afraid for you, the fearless soul is in a fearful state. Sinners, let my fears be *your fears*: what, is there such astonishing guilt upon *you*, & yet not afraid? Such a dreadful Roll writ against *you*, & yet not afraid? So many Sabbaths, Sermons, Warnings lost, and never to be recalled; nor any assurance left of one Sermon, or Warning more, and yet not afraid? Such a subtil Devil, such a deceitful Heart, such a tempting world, that you have to deal withall, such a black and bottomless Pit into which you are falling and yet not afraid? Oh what Stocks and Stones hath the Gospel to deal withall.

Beloved, I have laboured much with you, both publickly, & from house to house, to bring you under a due fear and jealousy of your selves; but hitherto your hearts have been too hard for me: Oh yet for trembling hearts, tremble and sin not, fear and pray, fear and hope; fear and repent; *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling*! Oh if my fears were once become your fears; your fears would become my hopes! Oh what a Day-spring of hopes would arise from the shaking of secure hearts! These Fears would be as the thicker Darkness, Fore-runners of break of Day.

2. My parting Wishes and Desires for you, are, 1. That the good seed which hath been sown amongst you, were well rooted in every heart: I wish that my Twenty years Ministry among you, may not be lost labour to any of your souls. 2. I wish that your next seeds-man may be more skilful and successful; that the good Lord will provide you a man that may teach you in Wisdom; gain you in Love: lead you on to life by

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in holy example; and if the Lord grant you this mercie, I wish that such an one may be dearly prized, and chearefully accepted by you. God keep this flock from a ravening Wolf; and a deceitful shepherd. 3. I wish that there may be no root of bitterness springing up amongst you; that there be no Divisions or Contentions, but that you may live in peace & love, that the God of Peace and Love may be with you. 4. I wish that this place, where so much good seed hath been sown, may become a fruitful field, that the fruits of Faith and Repen-
 tance, the fruits of Righteousness and Holiness may be in you, and abound; that you may be neither barren, nor unfruitful; that Religion in the power & practice of it may so visibly flourish in the several persons, in the several families of this Congregation, that they that go by, may see and say, *This is the field which the Lord hath blessed.* 5. I wish that whatever clouds may at any time gather over you, you may not fall down in a withering storm, or a sweeping flood, but may pass away in a mist, or dissolve into a fruitful dew; that no Persecutions, or Temptations may ever carry you down the stream with evil men, nor blight any hopeful beginnings that are budding forth in any of your souls: If *Tribulation* should be any of your lots, I wish that it may not be to you as the *Hayl of Egypt*, but as the *Dew of Hermon.* 6. I wish you a joyfull harvest, that you may reap in eternity what hath been sown in time; may you now sow in righteousness, and therefore reap in mercy; may every one that is now sowing in tears, for ever reap in joy. May you that go on your way weeping, bearing precious seed, return with joy, and bring your sheaves with you: May the showers of this day, be the watering of your seed, that it may spring up to eternal life. *Brethren*, my hearts desire for you all is, that you may be saved; and if there be any persons that bear evil will to me, my particular wish for them is, *The good will of him that dwelt in the*

Bush, be those mens portions for ever. These are some of my wishes for you: will you joyne your wishes with mine, will you turn your wishes into Prayers, and let this be your prayer, *The Lord grant thee thine hearts desire, and fulfill all thy mind.* Brethren, do I wish you any harm in all this? If not, if it be to be wished, that the word of Christ were rooted in your hearts, and your souls thereby rooted in the Grace of God; if it be to be wished, That your lusts were rooted out, your sins dead & dried up, your foot gotten out of the snare, your souls brought into the Fold, your fruits of righteousness and holiness abounding and growing up into eternal life: if all this be to be wished, then give in your votes with mine; wish and pray, pray and press on, press on and wait for the accomplishment of this Grace in you all. I tell you again, I wish you well; and not only I, but the Lord God that hath sent me to you: The Lord Jesus wishes you well; he wishes and woes, woes and weeps, weeps and dies, that your souls might live, and be blessed for ever: He hath once more sent me to you, even to the worst amongst you, to tell you from him, that he's unwilling you should perish, that he hath a kindness for you in his heart, if you will accept it: He hath *Blood* and *Bowels* for you; *Blood* to expiate your guilt, to wash away your filth; and *Bowels* to offer you the benefit of his *Blood*; with this wish, *Oh that it were theirs! Oh that they would hearken and accept!* Only I must add, That the Lord hath two sorts of wishes concerning sinners: The first is, *Oh that they would hearken!* Oh that they would come in, be healed and saved! *Deut. 5. 20* This wish is an *Olive Branch* that brings good tidings, and gives great hopes of Peace and Mercy. His last wish is, *Oh that they had hearkened!* that they had accepted! *Pf. 81. 13. Oh that my people had hearkened to me! Luk. 19. 42. Oh that thou hadst known in this thy day, the things that concern thy peace!* this wish hath nothing but dread & death

in it : it is the black Flag hung out, that proclaims external wars. The sense is, *Israel* had once a fair time of it ; a time of love, a time of grace, a time of peace. Oh that they had hearkned then, that they had known the things that concern their peace ! But wo, wo to them, 'tis too late, the door is shut, the season is over, the day is past : *But now they are hid from thine eyes.* There are three deadly darts in this wish [oh that thou hadst !] it includes in it these three cutting words, 1. *Thou hast not.* 2. *Thou mightest.* 3. *Thou shalt not for ever.*

1. There is this in it (*Thou hast not.*) What have I not ? why thou hast not known the things that belong to thy peace. Thou hast had the door of Glory, the gate of Heaven open to thee, and hast been called for and invited in, but thou hast lost the opportunity. Thou knewest not when thou wert well offered, nor wouldst take notice what a day was before thee, what a price was in thine hand ; thy peace, the Gospel of peace, the Prince of peace, a Kingdom of peace was set open, offered, and brought home to thy doors, but thou hadst so many other matters to look after, that thou tookst no notice of it, but hast let it slip. There's one dart (*Thou hast not known,*) there's a Gospel gone, there's a Christ gone, there's a soul, a Kingdom lost.

2. There is this in it (*Thou mightest.*) Oh that thou hadst ! why might I ? Yes, thou mightest, if thou wouldst thou mightest. Thy God did not mock thee, when he preached peace to thee ; he was willing, and wished it thine ; if thou wouldst, thou mightest have made it thine own ; but whilest he would thou wouldst not. There's another dart (*I might have known*) I have none to thank but my self for the loss, mine undoing was mine own doing. There are no such torments as when the soul flies upon it self, and takes revenge on its self ; oh the gashes that such self-reflections make ! Soul, how camest thou in higher into all this misery ? oh, 'tis of my self, my self, that my destruction is ? The door was open, and I was told of it, and was bid come in, but I would not. That I am lost and undone, was not my fate, which I could not avoid, but my fault and my folly. It seems to give some ease of our torment, when we can shift off the fault. It was not I, but the Woman ; said *Adam* ; It was not I, but the Serpent, said the Woman ; If that had been true, it would have given ease, as well as serve for an excuse. This thought (*'Twas mine own doing*) tears the very cawl of the heart. Oh, I have none to blame but my self, my own foolish and froward heart. This is my ignorance, this is my unbelief, this is my wilfulness, my lusts, and pleasures, and my Idols, that I was running after, that have brought me under this dreadful loss. 'Twas my own dowing.

3. There

3. There is this in it (*Thou shalt not for ever.*) Oh that thou hadst! why, may I not (yet?) Is there no hope of recovering the opportunity? not one word more, not one hour more, may not the Sun go (one) degree backward? No, no, 'tis too late, too late; thou hast had thy day, from henceforth no more for ever. There's the last Dart (*Times past*) there's the Death, the Hell the anguish, the Worm that shall gnaw to Eternity. This one word (*Times past*) sets all Hell a roaring; and when it is once spoken to a sinner on earth, there's Hell begun, go thy way wretch, fill up the measure, and fall into thy place; The Gospel hath no more to say to thee, but this one word, *Because I have called, & thou refusedst, I have stretched out my hand, & thou regardest not, but hast set at nought all my Counsels, and wouldst none of my reproofs; I also will laugh at thy Balamities, & mock when thy fear cometh; when thy fear cometh as a desolation, & thy destruction cometh as a whirlwind when distress & anguish cometh upon thee; then shalt thou call, but I will not answer: thou shalt seek me early, but shalt not find me.* Beloved, my hopes are, and I am not able to say, but that you are yet under the firm stith; oh that they would! Christ is yet preaching you to faith; and sends his Wish along with his Word, *Oh that they would believe!* Christ is yet preaching Repentance and Conversion to you, and wishes, *Oh that they would repent, that they would be converted!* And to this wish of my Lord, my soul, and all that is within me, says *Amen.* Brethren, will you yet again say your Lord nay? shall Christ have his wish? shall your servant for Jesus sake, shall I have my wish? will you now at last consent to be sanctified, and to be saved? Let me have this wish, and I dare promise for the Lord you shall have yours: even what ever your soul can desire. Brethren, this once hear, this once be prevailed upon; be content that your lusts be rooted out, and your Lord planted into your souls. Be content to be pardoned, content to be converted, content to be saved. This once hear, lest if you now refuse, ye no more be persuaded with. *Oh that they would!* but be for ever confounded with, *Oh that they had!* lest all our wishings and wooings of you, be turned into weepings and mournings over you, this once hear; Oh that you would.

I heartily thank you for your good wishes, and good will towards me; for your willing and chearful entertainment of my Person, and attendance on my Ministry. And particularly, for your passionate desire of my longer stay among you. Which desire, if God hath not, my soul could not have denied you. Though the Almighty, to whole pleasure it's meet that we all submit, hath said nay to that wish of yours; yet let your souls say *Amen* to this last of mine, that the Lord God would dwell among you, and in
you

you, both now and for ever. And having thus finished my Labours among you, I shall now close up with this double account.

1. Of my discharge of my Ministry in this place.

2. Of my deprival. And shall so commit you to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance amongst all them that are sanctified.

1. Of my discharge of my Ministry : what my Doctrine and manner of life hath been, is known to you ; and what my aim and intent hath been, is known to God. The searcher of hearts knows that is the salvation of souls that hath been the mark at which I have levelled. My way hath been to use all plainness, that I might be made manifest in your Consciences : Weaknesses, & Infirmities both natural and sinful (the Lord pardon them) I have had many. I am sensible that much more might have been done both in publick and in private; had it not been for a weakly body, and a sloathful heart. I repent that I have had no more zeal for God, no more compassion to souls ; I repent that I have been no more constant & importunate with you about the matters of Eternity. Oh Eternity, Eternity ! that thou wert no more in the heart and lips of the Preacher, in the hearts and ears of the Hearers. But while I thus judge my self for my failings, blessed be God for any sincerity to his Name, and good will to your souls that he hath seen in me. Blessed be God, I have a witness in my Conscience, and I hope in yours also, that I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. Brethren, I call Heaven and Earth to witness this day, that I have set before you life and death, good and evil, and have not ceased from day to day, to warn you to choose life, and that good way that leads to it ; and to escape for your lives from the way of sin and death. Oh remember the many instructions I have given you, the many Arguments whereby I have striven with you, the many Prayers that have been offered up for the guiding and gaining your souls : into the path of life, and the turning your feet out of the way of destruction. O might I be able to give this testimony concerning you all at my departure, *They have troden in the right path, they have chosen the good part that shall not be taken from them.* Brethren Beloved, with whom I have travelled in birth, that Christ might be formed in you, I must shortly give up my account in a more solemn Assembly : Will you help me to give it up with joy, by shewing your souls before the Lord, as the seal of my Ministry. Every sincere Convert among you, will be a Crown of rejoicing to me in that day. So let me rejoice, and let my joy be the joy of you all. What shall I say more? If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, any bowels and mercies ; if the glory of the eternal God, the honour of the everlasting Gospel, the safety of your

immo-

immortal souls, the incorruptible Crown, the exceeding, eternal weight of glory, weigh any thing with you, then once more let me beseech you by all this to hearken to that Word of the Gospel which God hath spoken to you by me.

2. Of my deprivation. The most glorious morning hath its evening; the hour is come wherein the Sun is setting, upon not a few of the Prophets; the shadows of the evening are stretched forth upon us; our day draws, our work seems to be at an end. Our Pulpits and our places must know us no more. This is the Lords doing, let all the Earth keep silence before him. It is not a light thing for me, Brethren, to be laid aside from the Work, and cast out of the Vineyard of the Lord; & it must be something of weight that must support under so severe a doom. I know there is not a few that will add to the affliction of the afflicted, by telling the World, 'tis their own fault, they might prevent it if they would; whether this be so or no, God knoweth, and let the Lord be Judge. Blessed be God, whatever be, this is not laid to our charge, as the reason of our seclusion, either *insufficiency* or *scandal*. You are not ignorant what things there are imposed on us, as the condition of our continuing our Ministration; which how lawful and expedient soever they seem in the judgment of many, yet have the most precious Arguments that plead for them, lest me utterly dissatisfied in my Conscience about them. I must profess before God and Angels, and Men that my non-submission is not from any Disloyalty to Authority, nor from Pride, Humour, or any factious disposition or design; but because I dare not contradict my Light, no do any thing concerning which my heart tells me, the Lord sayes, do it not. After all my most impartial Enquiries, after all my seeking counsel from the Lord after all my considering and consulting with men of all persuasions about these *Matters*, I find my self so far short of satisfaction, that I am plainly put to this choice, to part with my *Ministry* or my *Conference*. I dare not lie before God and the World, nor come and tell you I approve, I allow, I heartily consent to what I neither do, nor can; but must rather choose that my *Ministry* be sealed up by my *Sufferings*, than lengthened out by a *Lye*. Through the grace of God, though men do, yet my heart shall not reproach me while I live: *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater then our hearts, & knoweth all things*. But however, though I must now no longer act as a Christian, I should, to testify my obedience to Authority, have become all things to all men, to the utmost that I could, with any clearness of heart: But since *matters* stand so, that I must lose my place, or my peace, I cheerfully suffer my self to be thrust off the Stage. And now welcome the Cross of Christ, welcome Reproach, welcome Poverty, Scorne and Contempt, or what ever else may befall

me on this account. This morning I had a flock, and you had a Pastor, but now behold a Pastor, without a flock, a flock without a Shepherd : This morning I had an house, but now I have none ; This morning I had a living, but now have I none : *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord.* Beloved, I am sensible of many weakenesses and disadvantages I am under, which may render a suffering state the harder to be born ; help me by your Prayers ; and not me only, but all my Brethren also, with whom my Lot must fall, *Pray for us, for we trust that we have a good Conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.* Pray

1. That God would make our Silence speak, and preach the same holy Doctrine that we have preached with our Lips.

2. That he would give Supports answerable to our Sufferings ; that he who comforteth those that are cast down, will also comfort his Servants that are cast out.

3. That according to our earnest expectation, and our hope, as always, so now also, Christ may be magnified in us, whether it be by Life or by Death.

And thus, Brethren, I bid you farewell, in the words of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 13. 11. *Finally, Brethren, farewell, be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace and the God of Peace and Love shall be with you.*

And that God of Peace, that brought again from the Dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will ; working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ ; to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen.

HEAVEN OPENED:

3

Or, A Brief and Plain

DISCOVERY

OF THE

RICHES

OF GODS

Covenant of Grace.

BEING THE

THIRD PART

OF

Vindiciæ Pietatis.

By R. A. *L. L. B. D.*

London, Printed for Peter Parker, and are to be sold at his
Shop in Popes-Head-Alley, 1671.



To the READER.

Reader,

THe Providence of God hath led me to the Publication of the ensuing Treatise, much beyond my first Intentions.

There came to my hands a Synopsis of the Covenant of Grace on Gods part, with a Soliloquie annexed (both penned by the worthy Author of that form of Mans Covenanting with God, inserted in my *Vindiciæ Pietatis*) attended with the Authors desires, and of divers other Christians, that this also might be incorporated into the same Book.

These desires, neither being able

The Epistle to the Reader.

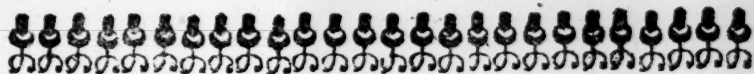
to resist, nor willing to deny, I prepared some Meditations to be premised, with a purpose to have put forth another Edition of that Book with this Addition, but finding it to grow into too great a bulk to be there inserted, both this on Godspart, and the former, on mans part, come into thy hands in this distinct Treatise, followed with my Prayers: That the good Land whereof some Clusters are here presented to thee, may be thine Inheritance. See and take,

Thine, because the Lords

July 8.
1669.

Covenant Servant.

R. A.



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(1)
HEAVEN OPENED:

OR,
*A Brief and Plain Discovery of the
Riches of Gods Covenant of Grace.*

The Introduction.

Good news from Heaven, the Day-spring from on high hath visited this undone World, after a Deluge of sin and misery, behold the Bowe in the Cloud: the Lord God hath made and established a new Covenant, and this is it that hath cast the first beam on the dark state of lost and fallen Man; and hath brought life and immortality to light. This Covenant is *the hope of Sinners, the riches of Saints, the Magna Charta of the City of God.* The forfeited Leasie of Eternity renewed; Gods *Deed of Gift*, wherein he hath on fair conditions granted Sinners their lives, and settled upon his Saints an everlasting Inheritance.

Hear, O ye forlorn Captives, who have sold your selves to eternal Bondage, spoiled your selves of all your glory, sealed your selves up under everlasting misery; you are dead in your sins, guilty before God, under wrath, under a curse, bound over to eternal vengeance. But behold, there is yet hope in *Israel* concerning this thing; the Lord God hath taken compassion upon you, hath opened a way for you to escape out of all this misery and bondage; Lift up the hands that hang down, comfort the trembling knees; An Ark, an Ark hath God prepared, in which is salvation from the Flood; a Covenant, a new Covenant hath he made and established, which

(if you lay hold on it) will recover all you have lost, ransom you from Death, redeem you from Hell, and advance you to a more sure and blessed condition, than your original state from which you have fallen. This is the hope of Sinners, this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord.

Glorious tidings, good news indeed ! but what is this Covenant ? Or what is there that is given and granted therein ? Why, in sum, there's all that Heaven and Earth can afford ; all that can be needed or desired : and this by a firm and irrevocable Deed, made over, and made sure to all that will sincerely imbrace it.

Particularly, God hath in his Covenant, granted and made over,

1. Himself.
2. His Son.
3. His Spirit.
4. The Earth.
5. The Angels of Light.
6. The Powers of Darkness.
7. Death.
8. The Kingdom.
9. All the means of Salvation.

CHAP. I.

God in the Covenant.

1. **T**He Lord God hath made over *himself* in this Covenant. That's the great and comprehensive promise, *Jer. 31. 33. I will be their God.* I am God, and what I am, 'tis all theirs; my self, my glorious incomprehensible Essence, all my glorious Attributes, my Omnipotence, my Omniscience, my Wisdom, my Righteousness, my Holiness, mine All-sufficiency, my Faithfulness; &c. I will make over my self to them to be henceforth and for ever theirs

Their

Their Friend, their Portion, their Sun, their Shield.

1. *Their Friend* : I was angry, but mine anger is turned away ; I was an adversary, I had a controverſie with them, but I am reconciled, I have found a ranſome, the quarrel is compoſed, my wrath is appeaſed, I am friends with them ; *I will forgive their iniquity, and their ſin will I remember no more ; I will take away their iniquity and receive them graciously ; I will heal their back-ſliding, I will love them freely ; for mine anger is turned away from them,* Jer. 31. 34. Hoſ. 14. 4. *Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good will towards men.* Fury is not now in me : favour, and friendship, love, and good will, is all they may henceforth expect from me. Sinners, what is there to be feared ? what is there dreadful, but an angry provoked God ? Thence is ſorrow and anguiſh, thence is famine and peſtilence, and ſword, thence is Death and Hell : he doth not know what the wrath of God means, that doth not ſee in the bowels of it, all the plagues above ground, and all the vengeance of eternal fire. What ever terrors or torments have ſeized upon thee ; upon thy body, upon thy ſoul ; whatever loſſes, croſſes, vexations, afflictions plague thee on this earth ; whatever horreur, and anguiſh, whatever amazing, confounding torments are like to meet thee, and ſeed upon thee in the Lake beneath, thou maiſt ſay of all this, *This is the wrath of God.* That day the Lord ſays to thee, *Fury is not in me,* he ſaith alſo, *Fear ſhall be no more to thee.* That hour the Lord ſaith, I am thy friend, Death and Hell vaniſh. The day is broken, the ſhadows fly away. And this is one thing included in that promiſe [*I am their God*] I am their friend.

2. *Their Portion.* Fury ceaſe ! Fears vaniſh ! Friendſhip, Favour, Life granted ! But what ſhall he have to live upon ? Man was never intended to be a ſelf-ſufficient ; he was created under a neceſſity of dependance on
some-

some-thing without him ; not only for the continuation of his being, but of the comfort of his being ; he cannot live upon the air, though he hath escap'd the fire : the soul of man is too big for the world ; like *Noahs Dove*, it can find no rest below, and where shall it find it, or on what shall it subsist ? Why, God will not starve his friends ; he that hath saved their lives, will find them a livelyhood ; because there is no other to be found, he himself will be a livelyhood to them ; their portion, their maintenance, and their heritage for ever. As their deliverance is from him, so their dependance shall be on him he is their substance, and on him is their subsistence, *Jer. 10. 16.* he writes himself, *the Portion of Jacob* : and as such his Saints accept him, *Psal. 16. 5. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance* ; he is their bread, and their water, their stock, and their store. The Lord [gives] portions to his enemies ; not only the young Ravens, but the old Lions, and Tigers, the worst of men do seek their meat from God, *Psal. 17. 14. they have their portion in this life, whose bellies thou fillest with thy bid treasure* : they have their portion : some of them have their portion in the City, others a portion in the Field : to some he gives a portion of gold, to others a portion of worldly-glory, to others a portion of pleasures ; by all these he deals, as the Father of the Prodigal, he gives them their portion. and sends them away. But whilst he [gives] portions to these, he [is] the portion of his Saints ; he makes over and settles himself upon them, as their Inheritance for ever : they shall never be in want whilst there is in him to supply them, they shall never be in straits whilst there is in him to relieve them : all their wants be upon me.

The Lord is their Portion, and he is a sufficient Portion : *With thee is the fountain of life, Psal. 36. In thy presence is fulness, Psal. 16.* The Lord God is all things

to them, enough and to spare : *In my Fathers house there is bread enough and to spare.* He that hath all things below God, but not God, hath nothing ; he that hath nothing besides God, but hath God, hath all things ; enough and to spare : filling up and running over ; there's still more to be had, if more could be held : the soul hath never enough, till it hath more than enough ; is never full till it runs over : while it can contain and measure & number all that it has, this is its judgment of all, *Panperis est numerare pecus.*

In God is enough for filling up and running over ; enough there is in him to fill up all their *faculties, their understandings* ; there are infinitely beautiful perfections, where we may gaze and glut our eyes with unspeakable delight ; but when we have looked the farthest into them, when the most searching eye, the most greedy thoughts have searched and run their utmost, they come not near the end ; they shall look and look, and see and see, and when they can reach no farther, then they shall admire those treasures of Light, and beauty, that are still beyond them. Admiration is the *understanding full and running over* : when its *Non-plust*, and can reach no farther, then it wonders at what it perceives still beyond it. The Apostle tells us, *Eph. 3. 18.* that the Gospel (which presents God in flesh) hath in it, and heighth, and depth, and length, and breadth ; and I may tell you from him, 'tis an heighth without top, a depth without bottom, a length without limits, a breadth without bounds ; in one word, immensity, unmeasurable, and therefore unspeakable, unsearchable glory. Whilest the blind would deride and despise the portion of the Saints, looking on God, and all the things of God, as *shallow* things, that have no depth in them ; they will be found by those that search into them, to be *deep* things, that have no bottom in them, *1 Cor. 2. The deep things of God.*

All the raptures, and extalies of glorious joys of the Saints in the other world, are the running over of their eyes upon their hearts, and do break in upon them from their vision of God.

There's enough to fill up their *wills and affections* : there's infinite goodness, incomprehensible love, marvellous loving kindness, unspeakable delights, glorious joyes, *Psal. 31. 19. Oh ! how great is the goodness which thou hast laid up for those that fear thee ! Oh ! how great is the goodness !* 'Tis *vox admirantis*, an admiring word; great beyond expression, great beyond imagination; *Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entred into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him* : and 'tis *vox exultantis*, of an heart leaping for joy, rejoycing in hope of the glory of God, which is laid up for his Saints. Laid up ! where ? why laid up in himself ; that's the Fountain, that's the Treasury ; there's love, there's joy, there's satisfaction, *our life is hid with Christ in God*. Oh love the Lord all ye Saints. O bless the Lord all ye his Saints. He that is mighty hath done for you great things : *Since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him, Isa. 64. 4.* Or, as tis in the Margin, *There hath not been heard or seen a God besides thee, which doth so for him that waiteth for him.*

There's enough to fill up our time, there's admiring work, and praising work for ever : [there's matter for love and joy, to live, and feed upon for ever ; endless praises, eternal pleasures, everlasting rejoycings, *Isa. 35. Everlasting joy, Psal. 16. Pleasures for evermore.* There's enough to reward all our labours, and repay all our expences : there's a full reward, *Gen. 15. 1. Fear not Abraham I am thy shield, and exceeding great reward.* Christian,
thou

thou shalt not serve the Lord for nought, he will reward thee, and 'tis little in his eyes, that thou shouldst serve him for Corn, and for Wine, for Sheep, and for Oxen; yea, for the Crowns and Kingdoms of this world; these shall not be thine hire; the everlasting God will be thy reward, thine exceeding great reward; exceeding not thy work only, but thy very thoughts also: A little is too much for thy earnings, but the whole world is too little for his bounty: less than nothing might satisfy for thy labours, but less than himself will not satisfy for his love: the eternal God will be thy reward. On the unsearchable riches of the poorest of Saints! *Oh nimium felices-bona si sua norint.* Poor! what, and yet hast a God! In want! what, and yet hast all things! Is he a God that is thine, and art thou still in straits? would a few sheep, and Oxen, vine-yards, and olive-yards, make thee a rich man, and can a God leave thee a Beggar; Is not a Pearl more than Pebbles? milk and wine, than mud and water? Men use to say, *Money is all things*, meat, and drink, and clothes, and friends, and lands, virtually all things. And is not God more than money? Sure he hath said to his Gold (*Thou art my God*) that cannot say, *Let God be mine, and then go thou thy way.* Hast thou a God and yet poor? Nay farther, would the fatness of the earth, and fulness of heaven, if thou hadst both, be enough for thee? Would corn, and wine, and houses, and lands, and pleasures here, and eternal life hereafter satisfy thee? and is not God alone as much as all this? Dost thou want Star-light when thou hast the Sun? Is the Ocean more full for the Rivers that run into it? Or would there be any want there, if all these were stopped and dry? Can they contribute to it, which have their rise from it? Hath the Almighty God a self-sufficiency, and hath he not enough to satisfy a poor worm? Is he blessed in himself, and mayest not thou be blessed in him? He that thinks any thing less than God will

will suffice, understands not a soul; and he that wants any thing more, understands not God. God alone is as much as God and all the World; and this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, God is their portion.

If enough be not yet said, look a while, and consider whence thou art taken up into this blessedness: What hast thou left? What an exchange hast thou made? Thou wert taken with the Prodigal from the trough, with the Beggar from the Dunghil, yea, as a brand out of the burning; there thy lot was fallen. Oh where hast thou left the rest of the world? Blessing themselves in vanity, pleasing themselves with shadows, and apparitions, feeding on ashes, warming themselves at their painted fire, sporting themselves with the wind, rejoycing in a thing of nought: their crackling thorns, their glosing pleasures, their drinkings, and dancings, and roarings, their horses, and their dogs, and their hawks and their harlots; making a shift a while to make merry with these, whilst they are hastning to the pit, to that fire and brimstone which is the portion of their cup.

Consider man, what is the chaff to the Wheat? What is a Comet to the Sun? What is the night to the day? What are bubbles and childrens toys to the durable riches? What are things that are not, to him whose name is (*I am*)? But oh, what is death, and wrath, and the curse, which was once all thine heritage, to that life, and love, and peace, and joy, and glory, which thou now possessest in that God that is thy portion? What a poor wretch wert thou once, when thou hadst nothing but sin, and shame, and misery, that thou couldst call thine own? these thou mightest call thine, sin was thine, woe was thine, death, and the grave, and the curse, and the pit were thine own; but that was all thou hadst; thy good things thou livedst upon, had they been of never so great value, were none of thine; thine house

house, and thy Lands are none of thine: thy gold, and thy silver, and thy substance are none of thine; they are all but borrowed, or committed to thee as a Steward, and all to be given up upon demand; and what thou hast spent of them, thou must be brought to a reckoning for; a poor wretch thou wert, and hadst just nothing, all that thou hadst was none of thine.

But now God is thine own, all that he is all that he has is thine; never couldst thou lay such a claim to any thing thou possessedst; to house, or wife, or child, or body or soul, as now thou maist to thy God. God is as surely thine, as thou art thy self: as sure as thou art a man, thou hast a God.

Come Christians, here's now thy portion, the light of thine eyes, the lifting up of thine head, the joy of thine heart, the strength of thy bones, thy stock, thy treasure, thy life, thy health, thy peace, thy rest, thy all; *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and in Earth there is none that I desire besides thee. My flesh and mine heart faileth, but God is the strength of mine heart, and my portion for ever, Psal. 73. 25, 26.* Here is thy portion, know it for thy good, take it for thine own; live upon it, and live up to it.

1. *Live upon thy Portion.* Here thou maist feed, wherein thou maist rejoyce, herein thou maist bless thy self for ever. *Let him that bleisseth himself on the earth, bless himself in the God of Truth.* Let him that rejoyceth in the earth, rejoyce in the God of Truth. Let the strong man live upon his strength, let the wise man live upon his wits, let the rich man live upon his lands, come thou, live upon thy God; come enjoy God and thy soul, enjoy God in thy soul, enjoy thy soul in God. Thou hast possession, what should hinder thy fruition? In fruition the Schools tell us there are three things, which go to the making it up; *Cognitio, Delectatio, Quietatio.*

1. *Know-*

1. *Knowledge*; according to the clearness or cloudiness of our apprehensions of any good, we more or less take the pleasure or comfort of it; and therefore the full fruition of God is not till at last, when we shall know as we are known: Here we see as but in a Glass, and darkly; we know but in part, and while we know but in part, we love but in part, and joy but in part; the dimness of our sight makes an abatement upon our joy: When the vail shall be taken away, when we shall come to see face to face, then we shall fully feel what it is to have a God. Christian, know thou the God of thy Fathers; the more thou knowest, the more thou hast.

The carnal world enjoy not God at all: God is not known in their Tabernacles: *In Jewry is God known, his Name is great in Israel: at Salem is his Tabernacle, and his dwelling in Zion.* But what of God in *Edom*, or *Ammon*, or *Amaleck*, or *Egypt*; those dark Regions wherein neither Sun nor Star appears? Leave them to their dung-hil gods, to the gardens which they have desired, and the Oaks which they have chosen. The Lord is before thee, know it for thy good. Study thy God, Christian; roll over his sweetness in thy mind, as thou dost the sweet morsel in thy mouth; see what he is, and what thou hast laid up in him: read over daily his glorious Names, walk through those chambers of his presence, his glorious Attributes; look into the Chamber of his Power, and see what thou hast laid up for thee there; go into the Chamber of his Wisdom, and see what that will afford thee; look into the Chambers of his *Goodness*, *Mercy*, *Faithfulness*, *Holiness*, and behold what treasures are laid up for thee in each of these: enter into thy Chambers, they are all thine; enter into thy Chambers, let thine eye be there let thy meditation be there, let thy soul be there every day; there's thy portion, search it out and know it for thy good. This is the first thing contained in Fruition, Knowledge.

2. *Delight.* Fruition is the taking the pleasure of what we have, *Frui est cum gaudio uti: Augustine.* We cannot enjoy what we do not love, and love hath delight. We cannot enjoy that wherein we do not joy. *Delight thyself in the Lord, Psal. 37. 4. I sate me down under his shadow with great delight. Cant. 2. 3.* If his shadow be so pleasant, what will his Sun-beams be? *Psal. 34. 8. O taste and see that the Lord is good.* Our senses help our understandings; we cannot by the most rational discourse perceive what the sweetness of honey is, taste it and you shall perceive it. His fruit was sweet unto my taste. Dwell in the light of the Lord, and let thy soul be always be ravished with his love. Get out the marrow and the fatness that thy portion yields thee. Let fools learn by beholding thy face, how dim their blazes are to the brightness of thy day.

Let thy delights in God be pure and unmixed delights, Let thy spirit be so filled with God, and so raised above carnal joys, and the matters of them, that it be no damp upon thee to have nothing but God. Thy Wine is the more sprightly when not mixed with water; Live above in that serene Air which is not incrassated with earthly exhalations. Sickly bodies, and so sickly souls, cannot live in too pure an Air. Be so wholly spiritual, that spiritual joys, spiritual delights, may be suited to thee, and sufficient for thee. Do not say I want the joy of the *Vintage*, and of the *Harvest*; I want the joy of the *Bridegroom*, and of the *Bride*; I want the sound of the *Milstones*, and the light of the *Candle*, to make my comfort full. Let the joy of the Lord be thy strength, and thy life; say with the Prophet, *Habak. 3. 17. 18. Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the Vines, the labour of the Olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut-off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet will I rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.* This is the second thing in fruition, Delight.

5. *Satisfaction.* The quiet, or resting of the soul in its portion; therefore the Schools say, it is only the *ultimus finis*, the last end, that is the proper object of fruition. The carnal world, whatever they possess, yet they cannot be said properly to enjoy it; though they be their gods that they live upon (their drag is their god, their Yarn is their God, their Plough, and their Plenty, and their pleasure is their god, they burn incense to them) though they be their gods that they live upon, yet they cannot enjoy them, there is no rest for them in their god, *Psal. 25. 12, 13. What man is he that feareth the Lord? his soul shall dwell at ease.* In the Original it is *shall lodge in godness.* The soul is never in ease whilst it is in want, every want wrings; it can never take up its lodging where it cannot take its rest. His soul shall be at ease, shall lodge, that is, shall take up its rest in the goodness of God; and when we find rest in our beds, then we enjoy them. Is thy soul lodged in God? O enjoy thy lodging: *Soul take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up for many years. Return to thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* As it was said [to] so let it be said [by] the Church and every Saint, *This is my rest, here will I dwell for ever.* Here thou maist find rest, when thou hast no other rock to lean upon; thou maist be at rest in thy God: in thy most restless state, in a weary land, in a barren wilderness, in a tempestuous Ocean: however it was in the vision of the Prophet, yet thou maist say, if the wind rise, the Lord is in the wind; if after the wind, an earthquake, the Lord is in the earthquake; if after the earthquake, a fire, the Lord God is in the fire; and where ever thou findest God thou maist find rest. If thou findest God in a Wilderness, thou wilt find rest in the Wilderness; if thou find God in the Earthquake, or the Tempest, or the fire, even there also thy soul shall find rest: When thou canst not rest in thy bed, nor in thine house, nor in thy land, thou maist

still

Still rest in thy God. Say, Christian, say again, *Return to thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with me.* Though my helps fail me, and my friends fail me, and my flesh and my heart fails me, God is the strength of mine heart, and my portion for ever: This is my rest, he will I dwell for ever.

To these I might add a fourth thing wherein Fruition stands. The *making use of our portion.* He enjoys, that uses what he hath; though the Schools distinguish betwixt *frui* and *uti*, yet in a sense (especially with a respect to our present estate) the latter may be comprehended under the former. We then enjoy our portion, when we have a power and a heart to make use of it on all occasions. I am thine, Soul, come and make use of me as thou wilt, thou maist freely; I have nothing but it is for thee; thou maist freely come to my store, and the oftner the better welcome: have thou not a God lying by thee to no purpose; let not thy God be as others gods, serving only for a shew: Have not a Name only that thou hast a God, since he allows thee, having such a friend, use him daily: *My God shall supply all your wants; never want whilst thou hast a God; never fear or faint whilst thou hast a God; go to thy Treasure, and take whatever thou needest; there is bread and, cloathes, and health, and life, and all that thou needest.* O Christian, learn the Divine Skill to make God all things, to make bread of thy God, and water, and health, and friends, and ease; he can supply thee with all these: or, which is better, he can be instead of all these, thy food, thy cloathing, thy friend, thy life to thee. All this he hath said to thee in this one word, *I am thy God*; and hereupon thou maist say, *I have no Husband, and yet I am no Widdow; my Maker is mine Husband. I have no Father, nor friend, and yet I am neither fatherless nor friendless; my God is both my father and my friend. I have no child, but is not he better to me than ten children? I have no house,*

but yet I have an home, I have made the most High my habitation. I am left alone, but yet I am not alone, my God is good company for me; with him I can walk, with him I can take sweet counsel, find sweet repose; at my lying down, at my rising up, whilst I am in the house, as I walk by the way, my God is ever with me; with him I travel, I dwell, I lodge, I live, and shall live for ever.

2. *Live up to your priviledge.* Live according to your rank and quality, according to your riches laid up for you in God. The rich men of this world live like rich men, they sort themselves with persons of their own quality, attend on the Courts of Princes, are imployed about the *Magnalia Regum*, you may read their estates in the whole way of their life, they wear them on their backs, spread their Tables with them, fill their bellies with them; they live sumptuously, and fare delicately. Christians, feed not on ashes or husks, you have better meat; you have milk and honey, marrow and fatness, the hidden Manna, the bread that comes down from Heaven, the water of life; you have blessed priviledges, precious promises, lively hopes, living comforts, glorious joyes, the fountain of life to feed your souls upon; come eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O my Beloved; out-fare the rich man, *Luke 16.* who fared deliciously every day; you have enough to maintain it; let every day be a Gaudy-day, a Feast-day with you.

Let your *cloathing* be according to your *feeding*. Be clothed with the Sun; put on the Lord Jesus. The Kings Daughter is (and so let all the Kings sons be) all glorious within, let their cloathing be of wrought gold: Be clothed with humility, put on love, bowels of compassion, gentleness, meekness; put on the garments of salvation.

Let your *company* and converse be according to your *cloathing*. Live amongst the excellent, amongst the Generation

neration of the just : Get you up to the *General Assembly and Church of the First-born*, to that innumerable company of Angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. Live in the Courts of the great King, behold his Face, wait at his Throne, bear his Name, shew forth his Vertues, set forth his Praises, advance his Honour, uphold his Interest : Let vile persons and vile wayes be contemned in your eyes, be of more raised spirits than to be companions with them : *Disce ex hac parte, sanctam superbiam, scito te illis esse meliorem.* Regard not their societies, nor their scorns, their *Euge's* nor their *Apoge's*, their flatteries or their frowns ; rejoyce not with their joyes, fear not their fear, care not their care, feed not on their dainties ; get you up from among them, to your Country, to your City, where no unclean thing can enter or annoy. Live by Faith, in the power of the Spirit, in the beauty of Holiness, in the hope of the Gospel, in the joy of your God, in the magnificence, and yet the humility of the Children of the great King.

3. *Their Sun.* He will discover and make manifest to them, the riches and glory of their portion : He hath granted them himself for their portion, and he will reveal and make manifest both their blessedness they shall enjoy in him, and the way to it, and also the dangers that lie in the way, *Psal. 84. 11. the Lord God is a Sun.* The Sun is the light of the world, it discovers it self, and all things else : We cannot see the glory of the Sun but by its own light ; the Moon, the Stars, the Firmament, and all this lower World, would all disappear, if the Sun withdrew its light : Beauty and Deformity, Safety and Danger, the Right Way and the Wrong, are all brought to view by the light of the Sun ; the Sun-light makes the day ; Night is spread over the World when the Sun is set : God is glorious, but who would be ever the wiser did not this glory shine ? *Psal.*

§6. 9. *In thy light we shall see light.* Why is the glorious God apprehended, understood, admired, by so few amongst the sons of men? Why, he is out of sight, the Sun is not risen upon them, nor shines unto them: they have Moon-light, or Starlight, some dimmer reflections of this glory, at second hand from the Creatures, but they see not the Sun.

What's the reason that truth and falsehood, good and evil, substances and shadows, things perishing and things permanent, are no better distinguished? What's the reason that men are so mistaken and misguidéd in their judgments, in their choice, in their way? That they are at such a loss, such Wanderers from their bliss? What's the reason that mens own sparks, the light of their own fires, their Candle-light, or Torch-light, their fleshly imaginations, their carnal prosperity, their pleasures, their ease, their earthly glory, and their carnal joys that hence flash up to them, are so adored and admired by them? Oh, they see not the Sun, God is out of sight, and thence are all their dotages, and foolish mistakes and miscarriages. God will be a Sun to his Saints (their) Sun. [*Thy Sun*] shall no more go down. They shall have both the *propriety* and the *comfort* of this glorious Sun; he will shew them his face, he will cause his glory to appear, he will lead them into himself by his own beams; he will shew them their end, and the means; the Goal, and their way to it; he will shew them the good part, and the right path; good and evil, duties and sins, realities and delusions, helps and hindrances, dangers and advantages, their snares and their succours, will all be discovered to them by the light of the Lord

Harken thou poor and dark soul, that hast chosen, but thou knowest not what; that art going, but thou knowest not whither; that art wandring and stumbling on, but thou carest not how; that complainest thou canst

not
not

not see, thou canst not value, thou canst not be affected with all the glory and joy of the invisible world ; that findest thy husks, and thy trash, to be a greater pleasure to thee, than all the riches of Immortality ; that wouldst fain mind, and chuse, and love, and relish, and seek God, and things above, but thou canst not : thou seest so little of the beauty of them, that they do not entice thine heart after them ; and when thou art seeking, thou art at a loss, and in the dark, as to the way that thou shouldest take. Harken Soul, thy God calls to thee ; *Come unto me, look unto me, and I will be thy Sun : I will shew thee all that glory, and the right way that will bring thee to it : I promise thee I will, trust me, I will be a light unto thee.*

4. *Their Shield*, Psal. 84. 11. *The Lord God is a Sun and a (Shield,)* The gods of the earth are so stiled, Psal. 47. 9. *The Shields of the earth* : much more the God of glory, Ephes. 6. 16. Faith is called a Shield : *Above all taking the shield of Faith* ; it signifies the same, as God is a Shield. Faith is to the Soul whatever God is. This is the grace that entitles the soul to God, and applies God to the soul, Gen. 15. 1. *Fear not, Abraham, I am (thy) shield.* What is promised to the Father of the Faithful, stands sure to all the Seed, Rom. 4. 16. The state of Christians in this life, is a *militant state*, a *state* full of hardships and hazard ; by reason whereof, as richly as they are provided for, they are subject to fears of being undone, and spoiled of all. They are in fears about things *Eternal* ; they have spiritual Adversaries that lye in wait for their souls, that fight against their souls, that are tempting them, and enticing them from their God ; that watch their opportunities to steal away their God, by stealing away their hearts from him ; and such dangerous attempts of this kind they meet with all, that they often are in great doubt what the issue may be. They are in fears about things *temporal* ; their names are shot at,

their liberties are invaded, their estates, with all the comforts of their lives, are in danger to be made a prey; to day they are a praise, to morrow a scorn; to day they are full and abound, but to morrow they may have nothing left; they die daily, they are killed all the day long.

But whatever their dangers and their fears thereupon are, here is sufficient provision made against all. God is their Shield.

Christian, thou hast enough, and all that thou hast is in safety. Thou art compassed about with a Shield, secured on all hands, there is no coming at thee. Whatever assaults are made, thy God is a wall of Partition betwixt thee and harm. They are not sheilds of brass and iron thou art furnished with, the strong God is thy defence. Wherefore dost thou doubt; O thou of little faith? A Christian, and yet afraid? shifting for thyself? taking care for the Asses, and Oxen, and Sheep? vexing and loading and losing thyself in thy cares and fears from day to day? Where is God, man? Doth not God take care for Oxen, and Asses, and all that thou hast?

But Oh! what meanest thou in this, to be shifting thy self from danger, by shrinking back from thy God? securing thy self from affliction, by taking sanctuary in iniquity? What art thou doing, but throwing away thy shield, to save thee from harm? making a breach in thy wall, to keep thee in safety? Gen. 17. 1. &c. Chap. 15. 1. Walk before me and be thou perfect; follow thou me, stick to me, and then, Fear not Abraham, I am thy shield. This now is the first and great promise of the Covenant, I am thy God, and the second is like unto it.

CHAR. II.

Christ in the Covenant.

II. **G**od hath put *Christ into the Covenant*, and made over him to his people, *Isa. 42.6. I will give thee for a Covenant.* He who is promised, as the chief matter, the Mediator, Surety, Scope of the Covenant, is by a Metonymy called the *Covenant*. *I will give thee for a Covenant*; that is, I covenant to give thee to the people. Whatever glory and blessedness there is in the fruition of God, wo is me, there is a *great Gulf* fixed between me and it, over which there is no passing; there is a *Partition-wall* raised, over which there is no climbing; there in an *hand-writing* against me, whilest that stands, all that is in God is nothing to me; were this God mine, I had enough. Let me be put to labour, or suffering; let me dig, or beg, or starve and die; whether I be rich or poor, have something or nothing, be a praise or a reproach, it matters not, so God were mine.

But oh, how may I obtain! who shall bring me to God? Why, the Lord God hath given thee his Son to undertake for thee, and to be thy way unto thy Father, *Heb. II. 19, 20.*

Jesus Christ, who is the *Morning-star*, the *Sun of Righteousness*, the *image of the invisible God*, the *First-born of every Creature*, by whom are all things, who is before all things, the *Head of the Body the Church*, who is the *beginning the First-born from the dead*, in whom dwells all fullness even the fullness of the Godhead bodily; who hath made peace by the blood of his Cross, *Col. I. and Chap. 2.* Whose Name is *Wonderful*, the *Counsellor*, *Mighty God*, the *Everlasting Father*, the *Prince of Peace*, *Isa. 9.6.* This Jesus is granted thee in the Covenant, to bring thee to God. To which blessed and glorious purpose he is exhibited.

1. As the Light of Life.
2. As the Lord our Righteousness.
3. As our Lord and King.
4. As our Head and Husband.

1. *As the light of Life.* *A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel, Luke 1. 32. In him was life, and the life was the light of men, Joh. 1. 4. He that followeth me, shall have the light of life, Joh. 8. 12.* There is a light that serves to kill and destroy, to bring death and condemnation to light: the light of the Law, that killing Letter, concerning which the Apostle, *Rom. 7. 9. 10. When the Commandment came, sin revived, and I died; the Commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.* But Christ brings life and immortality to light; Heaven, Glory, the invisible God, which are lost, out of reach, and out of ken, are all discovered in the face of Jesus Christ, *2 Cor. 4. 6. To give us the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* He is the image of the invisible God, the brightness of his Father's glory, the glass in which by reflection we see the Sun, *Job. 14. 8, 9. Shew us the Father, and it suffices us.* Why, says he, *Hast thou known me, Philip, and yet saist, Shew us the Father? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father, and this is the light of life, John, 17. 3. This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.*

2. *As the Lord our Righteousness,* This is his name, *Jer. 23. 6. He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.* To this end he is given to us.

1, *As our Propitiatory Sacrifice.* *1 Joh. 2. The Propitiation for our sins, 1 Cor. 5. Christ our Passover, Rev. 13. 8. A Lamb slain from the beginning of the World.* Our price, our ransom, to satisfy Justice, pacify wrath, discharge from the curse; to blot out the hand-writing, break down the wall of Partition; to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring

bring in everlasting righteousness, and so to bring us to God. Whatever difficulties there appear in thy way, whatever doubts arise in thy heart, from thy sins, from thy guilt, from thy poverty, from thy impotence; whatever objections thy fears may hence put in, there is the blood of the Lamb, that will answer all. Christ our Paslover is sacrificed for us.

2. *As a mercifull and faithfull High-Priest*, Heb. 2. 17. who hath made an attonement for us in the earth, and appears for us in Heaven; who hath made reconciliation for us and makes intercession for us. Heb. 9. 24. to appear in the presence of God for us: we read Exod. 28. 12, 29. that Aaron, the type of Christ, was to bear the names of the children of Israel, engraven in stones upon his shoulders, and upon his breast-plate, when he went into the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually. Our Lord is entred into the Heavens, to appear in the presence of God, with our names upon his shoulders, and upon his heart, for a memorial before the Lord; there is not the least of Saints, but there his name is engraven, Here is my *ransome*, Lord, and behold my *redeemed ones*. Here is my *price*, and my *purchase*, my redemption and my redeemed. Whatever accusations there be, whatever charge be laid against them, whatever guilt lies upon them, here are the shoulders that have borne all that was their due, and paid all that they owe; and upon these shoulders, and in this heart thou maist read all their names; and when thou readeest, remember what I have done for them, and acquit, absolve, and let them be accepted before thee for ever. Remember the tears of these Eyes, the stripes on this Back, the shame of this Face, the groans of this Body, the anguish of this Soul, the blood of this Heart; and when thou remembreest, whatever name thou findest engraven upon this Heart, and upon these Shoulders; they are the persons whose all these are; and whatever these

these are, whatever acceptance they have found with thee, whatever satisfaction thou hast found in them, put it upon their account ; never let me be accounted *the accepted*, if they be *rejected* ; never let me be accounted *righteous*, if they lie under the imputation of *wicked*. If they be not righteous in my righteousness, I must be guilty under their guilt. *Whatever I am, whatever my satisfaction is, all is theirs ; for them they plead, for them they pray ; my tears, stripes, wounds, groans, anguish, soul, blood, they all cry and say, Father forgive them, Father accept them.*

Of all cries, there are no such strong cries, as the Cry of Blood, and that whether it be against, or for the guilty ; its voice shall be heard on high, *Thy Brothers blood crieth unto me from the ground, Gen. 4.* And what followed ? Wo to those persons against whom blood crieth ; but where blood, such blood cries for them, for pardon, for mercie, blessed are those souls.

Christian, this blood is for thee, it *speaks better things than the blood of Abel, Heb. 12.* It pleads, sues, presses for thy discharge from all that is upon thee. Thou hast many cries against thee ; Satan cries, thy sins cry, thine own heart, thy Conscience cries against thee ; and thou art amazed at the dreadful noise they make ; but behold ! the blood of the Lamb, the blood of God cries for thee. Thou hast an Accuser, but thou hast an Acquitter : thou hast Adversaries, but thou hast an Advocate, *An Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for thy sins, 1 Joh. 2. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect ? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth ? it is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us, Rom. 8. 33, 34.*

Nay further, thou hast not only a *righteous*, but a *merciful* High-Priest, that is provided of a Sacrifice, and hath an heart to offer it for thee ; thy name is in his
hear

heart as well as on his shoulders, in his bowels as well as on his back. He hath blood for thee, precious blood; and he hath bowels for thee, pitiful bowels. He can have pity and compassion on the miserable, Heb. 5. 2. If he can find no other, he can find arguments enough from thy woe, and thy misery, to draw forth his soul towards thee. He is merciful, and his mercies are tender mercies; he is pitiful, and his compassions are tender compassions; thou art not so tender of the Wife of thy Bosome, of the Child of thy Bowels; thou art not so tender of thine own flesh, of the Apple of thine Eye, of thine own Soul, as thy Lord is of thee: His Spirit is moved for thee, his Soul melts over thee, he bleeds in thy wounds, he suffers in thy sorrows, his Eye weeps, his Heart breaks over thy broken and undone State; fear not his forgetting thee, his Bowels will remember him of thee.

He is a merciful and a faithful High-Priest. No dignity to which he is exalted above thee, no distance to which he is removed from thee, can make him forget his friends; He is gone into the Heavens, and there exalted above all Principalities and Powers, and set down at the right hand of God. He is gone, but he hath carried thy name with him, as a perpetual memorial for thee. Thou art unfaithful, shame to thee; thou forgettest thy Lord at every turn, every business that comes, every trouble that comes, every pleasure that comes, every companion that comes in, makes thee forget thy Lord, forget his Love, forget thy Duty; Oh how small a matter will steal thy heart from him; yea, stir up Tumults and Rebellions against him. Thy Comforts, thy Hopes, thy Needs thou hast daily of him, will not all prevail to hold him in remembrance with thee. Thou forgettest thy Lord, but he will not forget thee; though thou hast been unfaithful in many things; yet he is in nothing; 2 Tim. 2. 13. Yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself; he should not be true to himself, if he be not faithful to thee; his interest lies in

in thee; thou art his, his possession, a member of his body, fear not; if he should be unfaithful to thy soul, he is therein unfaithful to his own body. If thy case be such that he can help thee, if there be any thing wherein he can stand thee; if all that he hath, his blood his righteousness, his interest with the Father will be sufficient for thy help, he hath undertaken to procure it for thee, and secure it to thee. *Faithful is he that hath called you, and will do it.*

This now is that Jesus that is given unto us; as our propitiatory Sacrifice, as our merciful and faithful High-Priest, who suffered on the earth, and is gone into the Heavens for us; standing in his red robes, garments rolled in blood, with those glorious whites upon the red, pardon, peace, absolution, acceptance; with the names of his ransomed ones engraven upon his heart, and upon his shoulders: This is that Jesus, who is, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

3. *As our Lord and King. A King shall reign in righteousness, and in him shall the Gentiles trust.* Zach. 9.9. *Shout, O daughter of Zion, behold [thy] King cometh.* Isa. 9. 6. *The Government shall be on his shoulder. God hath more care of his Saints than to leave the Government of them on their shoulder. Is not her King in her?*

He is a King to gather them, a King to govern them, a King to defend and save them; to save them from their temporal enemies, the sons of violence, the men of this evil world; from their spiritual enemies, to save them from their sins. *Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins,* Mat. 1. 21. 'Tis a mercy to be under government, under government and under protection. What would become of us, were there no King in Israel? where there's no King, all are Kings; more Kings than men? Satan will be a King, every lust will be a Lord, as many Kings as there are Devils and
Sins.

Sins. Whither would our unruly hearts carry us? How easily would our wily and potent enemies ruine us? What tyranny would sin exercise within? what cruelty should we suffer from without? Whither should we wander? where should we fix? What peace, what order, what stability? Whence should counsel, and protection, and salvation come, were there no Lord over us? 'Tis a mercy to be under Government; but to be under such a Government, under a King, and such a King? such a wise and potent King, such a meek and merciful King, such an holy and righteous King? O what a wonder of mercy! *Rejoyce greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee, he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an Asses colt, &c.* [He is just having salvation] As a Priest he hath purchased, as a King he bestows his salvation. He comes not to get, but to give; not to give *Laws* only; but to give *Gifts* unto men; and he gives like a King, Palms, Crowns, and Thrones, *salvation to his people by the remission of their sins.* Oh how unthankful, oh how foolish is this rebellious world? Impatient of subjection? shake off the yoke? groan under duty? under discipline? We will not have this man to rule over us? Who then shall save you? hard to be a Christian? strict laws, severe discipline, no liberty? Is this thy complaint? that is, wo is me, I am so limited, and hedged in on all hands, that there is no liberty left me to be miserable; if I will be his, I must be happy.

Let fools inherit their own folly, but let Israel rejoyce in him that made him; let the Children of Zion be joyful in their King; for the Lord taketh pleasure in his people, he will beautifie the meek with salvation. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doers, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory? The Lord of hosts, yea, the Lord our righteousness, he is the King of Glory. The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Law-
giver,

giver, the Lord is our King, he will save us. Praise ye the Lord. Come all ye *Nimrods*, ye mighty Hunters on the Earth : Come all ye sons of *Anak*, ye seed of the Giants : Come all ye sons of *Belial*, ye seed of the Adulterer and of the Whore : Come all ye *Ishmaelites*, and *Ammonites*, ye *Moabites* and *Hagarenes*, associate, confederate, take counsel together, smite with the tongue, bite with the teeth, push with the horn, kick with the heel : Come all ye *gates of Hell*, and Powers of Darkness ; thou Dragon with all thy Armies, with all thy fiery darts, and instruments of death : Come thou *King of Terrours*, with thy fatal dart ; the Virgin, the Daughter of *Sion*, hath despised you all, she hath laughed you to scorn ; the Daughter of *Jerusalem* hath shaken her head at you ; her King is in the midst of her, the Lord is her King, he will save her.

4. *As our Head and Husband.* He that is given to be Head over all things to the Church, is given to be the Head of the Church, *Ephes. 1. 22, 23.* and of every member in particular, *1 Cor. 11. 3.* Believers are all joyned to the Lord, *1 Cor. 6. 17.* United in Christ as fellow-members ; united unto Christ as their common Head ; *From which all the body, by joynts and bands, having nourishment ministred, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God, Col. 2. 19.* They are married to Christ, *2 Cor. 11. 2. I have espoused you to one Husband.*

From this Union follows :

1. A Communication of Influences.

2. A Complication of Interests.

1. *A Communication of Influences.* [Having nourishment ministred] Christ our Head, is our Fountain of Life. Our Head is our Heart also, out of it are the issues of Life ; from him we live, and are nourished and maintained in life. He is our *Joseph*, all the Treasures of the Holy Land are with him. *In him are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, Col. 2. 3. It pleased the*
Father

Father that in him should all fulness dwell, Col. 1. 19. He is the only begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth.

Here note :

1. What Grace there is in Christ. The Schools tell us, that in him there is a three-fold Grace.

1. *Gratia Unionis* : The Grace of Union. *The Humane Nature of Christ*, hath received the high grace or favour, to be personally united to the second Person in the Godhead; by virtue of which Union, the fulness of the Godhead is said to dwell in him bodily : Bodily, that is, personally, or substantially, in opposition to the Types and Shadows of the Old Testament, in which God (in a figure) is said to dwell. God is said to dwell in the Tabernacle, in the Ark of the Covenant, in the Temple; but in these he dwelt only as figures, and shadows of the Humane Nature of Christ : In Christ he dwells not in a figure, but personally and substantially. As Christ, Coloss. 2. 17. is called the Body, in opposition to the Types of Old, which were but the Shadow; so bodily here, notes not a figurative, but a personal inhabitation. Christ is the body, not a shadow; and God dwells in him bodily, that is substantially, and not in a shadow.

2. *Gratia Habitualis*, Habitual Grace. All those moral perfections, wherein stands the holiness of his Nature : The love and fear of God; his humility, meekness, patience; in sum, his perfect conformity to the Image and whole Will of God. Such an High-Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, Heb. 7. 26.

3. *Gratia Capitis*; or that honour which is given to him to be Head of the Church.

2. How Christ is said to be full of Grace; there is a two-fold fulness of Grace.

1. *Ex parte ipsius gratie*. In respect of Grace it self. Thus he is said to be full of grace, that hath all grace, and hath it in the greatest excellency and perfection of it, that doth pertingere ad summum gratie. *Aquin.*

2. *Ex parte habentis gratiam.* In respect of the person that hath it: And thus a person is said to be full of grace, that hath as much grace as he is capable of. Christ is full of grace in both respects; that grace which is in him, is grace in the highest perfection of it, and as much as his vessel can hold.

3. That this fulness of Christ is ours, and for us, *John 1.16.* Of his fulness do we receive grace for grace. *Col. 3. 3.* Your life is hid with Christ in God: Your life, that is, both your spiritual life, grace, and your eternal life, glory, *1 John 5.11.* This is the Record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Our life is said to be in Christ, in three respects,

1. It is hid in Christ, as the effect in the cause. As the life of the branches is hid in the root, so is the life of a Christian in Christ. He is our root.

2. It is deposited with Christ; it is laid up with him, committed to his trust and custody; with him it is secured and put into safe hands.

3. The dispensation of it is committed to him: From him it is at his pleasure to be derived to us. *Of his fulness we receive.* The Son hath life in himself, and he giveth it to whom, when, and in what measure he pleaseth.

Christian, Art thou nothing in thy self? Thou hast enough in thy Jesus. Art thou dark? He's a Fountain of Light. Art thou dead? He's a Fountain of Life. Art thou poor and low, weak in knowledge, in faith, in love, in patience, &c. He's a Treasure of all Grace; and what he is, he is for thee. Is he wise? he is wise for thee: is he holy? he is holy for thee: is he meek, merciful, humble, patient? he is so for thee: is he strong, is he rich, is he full? 'tis for thy sake: as he was empty for thee, weak for thee, poor for thee; so for thee he is mighty, he is rich and full. Whilest thou bewailest thine own poverty and weaknets, Oh bless thy self in thy Lord, in his riches, righteousness and strength.

2. *A Complication of Interests*: As the Head and Body, as the Husband and Wife, so Christ and his Saints are mutually concerned; are rich or poor, must stand and fall, live and die together. As the Husband conveys to the Wife, a little to what he hath; as the Wife *holds of the Husband*; so is it betwixt Christ and his Church; they have nothing but through him, their whole *tenure* is in *capite*, they hold of the Head, they have nothing but through him, and whatsoever is his, is theirs: His God is their God, his Father is their Father; his blood, his bowels, his merits, his Spirit, his victories, all the spoils he hath gotten, all the Revenue and Income of his life and death, all is theirs. For them he obeyed, suffered, lived, died, rose, ascended, is set down in glory at the right hand of God. He obeyed as their Head, died as their Head, rose, ascended, reigneth as their Head; and hath in their names taken possession of that inheritance which he purchased for them. Thus is that Jesus which is given to us, and thus is he granted and made over to all his Saints in this Covenant of God.

CHAP. III.

The Spirit in the Covenant.

III. **G**od hath put his Spirit into the Covenant; the Almighty, the Eternal Spirit; the holy Spirit, the Spirit of Glory, and of God.

This holy and eternal Spirit is first poured forth on our head, the Lord Jesus; to anoint him our Redeemer, to furnish and qualifie him for that great undertaking, Isa. 61. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek, &c.* Isa. 11. 2, 3, 4. *I wil put my Spirit into him the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, and of the fear of the Lord,* Isa. 11. 2.

And he is promised to each member, Ezek. 36. 27. *I will put my Spirit within you.* To all these he is granted,

1. As a Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation.
2. As a Spirit of Holiness and Sanctification.
3. As a Spirit of Truth and Direction.
4. As a Spirit of Comfort and Consolation.

1. *As a Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation*, Eph. 1. 17, 18. To enlighten them, to open their blind eyes, and to shine into their hearts; *to give them the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, that they may know what the hope of his calling is, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints.* To counterwork the spirit of this world, whose work is to blind mens eyes, lest the light of the glorious Gospel should shine unto them, 2 Cor. 4. 4, 5, 6.

This is he by whom the Father hath called us out of darkness, into his marvellous light, 1 Pet. 2. 9. The light that the Spirit brings in, is a marvellous light, and that in three respects :

1. It is a marvellous thing that ever light should come in to such dark souls : That those that were born blind, and upon whom the god of this world had for many years together been trying his skill to thicken their darkness, to encrease and seal them up under it ; that ever such eyes should be opened, and the light of life should shine in upon such hearts, this is a marvellous thing. When our Lord Jesus in the days of his flesh, opened the eyes of those that had been born blind, the people ran together, and wondered at the sight. If you should see stones to live, if you should see dead stocks, or dry bones to walk up and down the streets, if you should see trees, or houses, or mountains full of eyes, this were not more full of wonder, than to behold blind sinners receiving their sight. Then wert once in darkness, art thou now light in the Lord? Stand and wonder at thy cure.

2. They are marvellous things which this light discovers. It is a wonder that such eyes should ever see, and they

they see wonders. The Gospel is a Mystery full of wonders : they are heights and depths, and lengths, and breadths. *We have seen strange things to day*; Strange love, strange grace, wonderful wisdom, wonderful pity, patience, mercy; wonderful providences, wonderful deliverances, incomprehensible excellencies, unspeakable joy and glory : 'Tis a wonder there should be such things every day before our eyes, and yet we could not see them till now, and 'tis a wonder, that when we did not see them before, we should ever see them now; that those things which we despised, derided, mocked at, stumbled at, as meer foolishness and fanſie, we should now see and admire, even to astonishment; that that Jesus, which was to the Jews a stumbling block, to the Greeks foolishness, should be to the same men, when called, *the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God*. O the deep things of God! O the unsearchable riches of Christ! that he that searcheth all things, reveals unto the Saints! O the hidden treasures they now discover in this deep Mine! To you that believe, he is precious, a praise, an honour; all fair, all glorious; and you have seen his glory, as the glory of the only begotten Son of God, full of Grace and Truth.

Again, There are *marvellous evils*, as well as *good things*, that by this light are brought to light. Sin, with all the hidden things of darkness, that lay below in those Chambers of death; the secrets of the evil heart of man. Sin appears a wonder to the savingly enlightened soul; *exceeding sinful*, a world of wickedness.

There's Death, and Hell, and the Devil, in every sin; unkindness, unthankfulness, folly, enmity, rebellion, spite, and the blackness of darkness. What once appeared as a pleasure, a delight, a beauty; or at least if an evil, yet but a trifle, a matter of nothing, is become a plague, a terror, a burthen, a bondage, bitterness, shame, sorrow; and such an high provocation, that whereas once he

swelled, and murmured, and cried out of rigour, severity, cruelty in the least punishment of it ; now he wonders at the clemency and patience, and forbearance of God, that such an affront and provocation, had not long since turned the whole earth into an hell.

Christian, thou complaineſt thou canſt not ſee, thou canſt not feel, thou canſt not mourn, thou canſt not break under all the guilt that lies upon thee ; thine heart is hard, thine eyes are dry, not a tear, not a groan, ſcarce a ſigh will all this evil fetch out from thee. O this blind and ſottiſh mind ! O this dead and ſenſleſs heart ! what ſhall I do ? what would I not do, to get me a melting, mourning, broken ſpirit ? but I cannot, I cannot ; I cannot ſee, I cannot bleed, nor break : O beg the light of this holy Spirit ! and if the ſight that it will preſent thee with, of this wonderful evil, do not rend thy heart, and turn thy ſtomach, and open all thy Sluces, and let out thy ſoul in ſighs and groans, in ſhame and ſorrow, thou maiſt then well be a wonder to thy ſelf. But be not diſcouraged, be not diſmaid ; do not ſay, this Rock will never break, this Iron will never melt ; I may go ſighing for ſighs, mourning after tears, groaning after groans, but all in vain, it will never be ; paſt feeling, paſt feeling, ſorrow flies ſtill from me ; repentance is hid from mine eyes ; do not thus diſcourage thy ſelf ; wait for this ſpirit, open to it, and thou ſhalt ſee flowing in ſuch ſtreams of ſelf-ſhaming, ſelf-confounding light, as ſhall flow forth in ſelf-abating, ſelf-abhorring ſtreams of tears.

3. Theſe *marvellous things*, are revealed with *marvellous clearneſs* ; that is in compariſon of what they are to the purblind world, and in compariſon of what they themſelves once ſaw. They come to ſee the glory and the beauty, and the reality of the wonderful things of God. *We have ſeen his glory*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *John 1.* *The kindneſs of God our Saviour (appeared,) but we all (with*
open

open face) behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, 2 Cor. 3.18. Out of Sion hath he appeared in perfect beauty.

It's prophesied, Isa. 5. 3. of the unbelieving world, that when they should see Christ, they should see no beauty in him.

Strange, Though he were all beauty, yet they should see him, and yet see no beauty: That is, they should see him, and yet not see him. They see not Wood for Trees. What is thy beloved more than other Beloveds? What is Christ more than an ordinary man? What is the Gospel more than an ordinary Story? What is the Spirit? What is Truth? What is there in this Faith and Love, in this Holiness and Righteousness, in this Peace of Conscience, and Joy of the Holy Ghost? what substance is there in them? where is the glory, and wherein is the Excellency of them? *Which way came the Spirit of the Lord from me to thee? Thou shalt know in that day, when thou shalt call to the Mountains to fall on thee, and the Rocks to hide thee from the face of God and the Lamb. We know whom we have believed: we know that we know him: we speak that which we know, and testify that we have seen. We have an Unction from the Holy One, we know all things. God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God. Now we have received not the Spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. We have a clear and certain sight: we do not see Men as Trees walking, with our eyes half open; we see Men as Men, Christ as Christ, Truth as Truth, in its naked lustre and evidence. This we have seen, and do testify, neither deceiving, nor being deceived. We thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.*

And as they see Truth and Holiness, and Goodness, in their wonderful Glory and Beauty; so also Folly and

Falshood and Sin, in its wonderful ugliness and deformity. *Sin appears to be sin, to them, Rom. 7.* Folly to be Folly, Falshood to be Falshood; they see men as men, Christ as Christ, Truth as Truth, Holiness as Holiness; and they see Beasts as Beasts, Fools as Fools, Sin as Sin, Devils as Devils, Hell as Hell: They see all things as they are, Temptations as they are, Delusions as they are; they see what is under them, the Hook under the bait, the sting in the Locusts tail, the war in the Devils heart, carried on under his fawning face; *We are not ignorant of his Devises.*

Sinners, Cease your wondring at the Saints, let them be no longer *for signs and for wonders in Israel*; cease your wondring at the Saints, and come and wonder with them. Wonder not that they say not as you, live not as you, run not with you after the same Follies and Vanities; Oh! if ye once come to see what they see, you will be a wonder to your selves. Mock not at their blessedness, *Blessed are their eyes, for they see.* The blind envy, but do not disdain the seeing. Say not, These men are in a Dream, or Drunk, or Mad, take heed, Blaspheme not the Holy Spirit, call not his light darkness, put not your darkness for light. Would you know, when these men testifie what they have seen and heard, whether they are sober or beside themselves? *Come and see*; I say not, *stand and see*; you cannot see at that distance you stand; come near, come in and you shall see; see your blindness first, if ever you will see the light. Oh! *bewail your darkness, and seek light, seek and you shall see it.* Son of David, have mercy on me. Why, what wilt thou, man? Lord, that I may receive my sight. Shall that be thy cry; O pity thy blind soul! O pray for eyes. They that see, pity the blind; we have a little Sister that hath no breasts, we have a poor brother (yea, a world of them) that have no eyes. What shall we do for our poor Brethren, in the day that they shall be spoken for? Oh! be eyes to thy blind,

blind, be a light to thy dark souls ; let them that dwell in darkness see thy great light. Sinners, those whom you persecute, do thus pity, do thus pray for you ; *Lord, that their eyes might be opened : will you say Amen to their prayers ? or will you say, Lord, regard not their word, we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes.*

Christians, *be marvels.* You that have seen marvellous things, be marvellous persons, set the world a wondering for something. Let your light shine, let the light which hath shined into your hearts, shine forth in all your paths : let the Spirit of Light within you, be a spirit of Glory resting upon you. *Once you were darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord ; Walk as children of the light. Be ye holy, harmless, the children of God, without reuke in the midst of a crooked Generation, amongst whom ye shine as lights in the world.*

Beclouded Christian : thou goest on bemoaning and bewailing thy self, complaining that thou art still blind ; the light hath shined into thy darkness, *but thy darkness comprehendeth it not ;* thine eye is yet but tender, at least and thou canst see but little ; but little of Christ, the Sun is but as a spark to thee ; but little of sin, that Mountain looks yet but as a Mole-hill, it is neither clear nor dark, neither night nor perfect day : thou hopest that long ere this thy Scales would have fallen off, the Vail would have been removed, but they abide upon thee ; thou waitest for light, but behold obscurity ! for brightness, but thou walkest in darkness ; thou goest on, adding darkness to darkness, the darkness of sorrow, to the dimness of sight. Thou fearest that the Gospel is hid from thee, thou doubtest 'tis still night, because it is not yet noon with thee. But hearken, as little as thou seeest of Christ, dost thou see so much, that thou prizest, and lovest, and cleavest to him above all ? as little as thou seeest of sin, dost thou see so much, that thou loathest, and shunnest it above all things ? dost thou walk in that
little

little light thou hast? dost thou love, long, wait, cry for the light? *Send forth thy Light and thy Truth, lift up the light of thy countenance; Sun of Righteousness shine upon me; why are the wheels of thy Chariot so long a coming? when Lord? Make hast my Beloved: O might I once see thy face, as the Sun, looking over the Mountains.* Is this thy voice? are these the breathings of thy soul? Be of good comfort these are the glimmerings and groanings of that holy Spirit within thee, which hath already delivered thee from darkness, and will bring thee forth into his marvellous light; thou shalt know, if thou follow on to know the Lord. *Arise, shine, thy light is come, the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.* Though yet (as to thy sense) it be neither clear nor dark, neither night nor perfect day, *in the evening there shall be light.*

2. *As a Spirit of Holiness and Sanctification:* He is given as an holy Spirit, and as a sanctifying Spirit; therefore Sanctification is called the Sanctification of the Spirit, *2 Thes. 2. 13.* He comes to change us into his own Nature, to make us partakers of his Holiness; he is a Refiners fire, and Fullers Soap, *Mal. 3. 2.* to purge, and work, and wash off the filth, and corruption of our Natures, what it is said he shall be to the Church, *Isa. 4. 4.* *A Spirit of Judgment, and a Spirit of Burning,* to wash away the filth of the Daughters of Sion, and to purge the blood of Jerusalem, from the midst thereof: (*A Spirit of Judgment,*) that is, *in the Rulers of Israel;* stirring them up to do Justice, and execute Judgment, that so the guilt of blood may be taken away, *Isa. 32. 15, 16.* and a *Spirit of Burning;* that is, *in the hearts of the People of Israel,* to consume and destroy the inward lusts of their hearts, that no more such wickedness be committed amongst them. This he is to every Saint; a Spirit of Judgment, *to give sentence* against their Lusts, to condemn them to the fire; these must be cast out, to the fire with them; away with them, get ye hence ye
Sons

Sons of the Bond-woman; you may not be Heirs with the Sons of the Free-woman. The Spirit of the Lord first discovers and convinces of sin, judges betwixt light and darkness, grace and sin, and then gives sentence, *Away with these lusts, they may not be suffered to live.*

A Spirit of Burning, to execute the sentence, to consume them in the fire. The Spirit of Sanctification is a Spirit of Mortification, *Rom. 8. 13. If ye (through the Spirit) do mortifie the deeds of the body.* It is the Spirit that kills, the flesh profiteth nothing.

The Spirit *implants the soul into Christ*; gives it an interest in his death, brings it under the influence of his death. *Christus crucifixus est, Christus crucifigens.* 'Tis the death of Christ that is the death of sin; these Thieves are crucified with him; *Rom. 6. 6. Our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should no longer serve sin.* Hell knew not what they did, when they crucified Christ; Death with all its Armies, were put to death with him.

The Spirit raises up *another party* in the soul, a party against a party, an Army against an Army: brings grace in to take up Arms against sin; Grace doth not only fight against sin, but is in the very nature of it the death of sin; as the Generation of a new, is the corruption of the old form. Humility is pride dead. Meekness is sinful passion and frowardness dead. Patience is impatience slain.

The Spirit excites and stirs up the soul against sin, *sets it praying against it*; the Spirit of Grace is a Spirit of Supplication, fetches down Hailstones, and Thunderbolts from heaven to destroy these *Amorites*; *sets a watch against it*, presses the soul to deal wisely with it to keep it low, by cutting off all provision from the flesh, restraining and keeping it short of all those fleshly objects, which would keep it in heart, and so it is starved to death. It is true, our greatest wisdom, watchfulness, absti-

abstinence, self-denial, and all external means alone, will fall short of killing one lust; it is the Spirit that killeth, without it, the flesh profiteth nothing; all external attempts for the mortification of the flesh, are but a fleshly mortification: *But if ye (through the Spirit) do mortify: pray in the Spirit, watch in the Spirit, curb and keep short, and keep under this body, still taking in the assistance of the Spirit, then it shall die.*

Christian, thou livest in a weary land, and thou hast but a weary life of it, briars and thorns are with thee, the *Canaanite* is yet in the Land, thou sojournest in *Mesech*, and hast thine habitation in the Tents of *Kedar*; and thou hast a *Mesech* and *Kedar* within thee; thou hast Armies within thee of fleshly lusts, which fight against thy soul: thou goest mourning daily, because of the oppressor, those spiritual wickednesses which lie in thine heart, and war in thy members: thou often groanest and criest out to thy God, *Liberty, liberty, redemption, redemption. O this proud heart! O this vain heart! O this earthliness! O this fleshliness, this fleshliness, this enmity and rebellion against the law of my mind, O my God! when I would do good, evil is present with me, I cannot, I cannot do the things that I would; I can with no peace serve or enjoy my God and my soul: my duties are either prevented or polluted, my comforts are either wasted or made quite to vanish and disappear: when I would serve my God, I must away to serving my belly, or my back, or my friends; when my soul is a little gotten upon the wing, and soaring in the upper Region, it is presently checked, pulled down again to the earth. O my pinioned imprisoned soul! Who is me, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Why, yet comfort thine heart, the Enemy lies upon thee as a flood, but the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a Standard against them. Thou complaineest thy gold is become dross, thy wine is mixed with water, yea, with mud and dirt, yet he will turn his hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy Tin.*

Though

Though these briars and thorns be set in battle against thee, yea, and against him also, yet he will go through, go through them, he will burn them together, *Isa. 27. 4.* Thou complaineest that thy garments are defiled, thy glory is stained, thy beauty is marred, the Image of thy God is so defaced, that there is but here and there a spot of it left upon thee. Thou art black, but not comely: whilst thy Lord says, *Thou art all fair, O my love*, thou criest out, *I am all foul, O my Lord*: thou wouldst be holiness to thy Lord, but thou art an offence to him; holiness is still thy love, and thy desire, and thy longing, but it flies from thee; it is rather thy wish than thy hope, thou canst weep over, but thou canst not weep out thy deformity, thine iniquity is still marked before the Lord. If there be a little grace in thee, yet there is such a weakness in its sinews, such a paleness in its face, that it is not like to live; or if it live, Oh! how little hope that ever it should thrive or flourish. Thus thou complaineest, thus thou goest mourning, and sighing, and sinking, and fainting in thy mind, and now and then venturest out a desponding prayer: *Lord pity, Lord look upon my sorrow, and my sin; Lord, wash me; Lord, help me.* Why, the Lord God hath sent thee his help out of his Sanctuary, and his strength out of Zion. The eternal Spirit is come down on purpose to give battle to the flesh, to subdue thine iniquities, and bring all those that rise up within thee, under thy feet. Thou mistakest thy self and thine enemies, if thou thinkest they will be conquered by one blow of thine arm; this kind goeth not out so; nor by might, nor by power, much less by weakness, and by flesh, by any weak attempts of thine own, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. 'Tis work for a God to relieve & cleanse such an heart, to turn such an hell into an heaven. What thou canst not do, being weak through the flesh; behold, he comes down to do it for thee; thou hast proved thine own weakness, now try everlasting strength: He stands at the door and knocks, hear

his voice at the door, *Wilt thou be made clean? wilt thou be made whole? wilt thou be delivered?* Open to him, and with him deliverance comes in, he stands at the Pool stirring the waters for thee; put in thy Cripple-soul, and be healed of all diseases; say to him, *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*; and thou shalt soon have this answer, *I will, be thou clean.*

3. *As a Spirit of Truth and Direction, Job. 16. 13.* he shall guide them by his Counsel, he shall lead them in the way that they shall go, *Isa. 30. 21. They shall hear a word behind them, saying; This is the way, walk ye in it, when they are turning to the right hand, or to the left.* He shall lead them into all truth, to prevent mistakes; and into all Righteousness, to prevent miscarriages: Nay more, he shall not be only their Star, but their strength too; he shall guide them on, and help them on, they shall be lead by the Spirit, bound in the Spirit, pressed in Spirit; they shall be excited, assisted, carried on in the power of the Spirit, in the way that they should go; he will cause them to walk in the Statutes of the Lord. Whatsoever thy waywardness and thy wandrings have been, whatever thy feebleness and fickleness be; whatever false lights and false ways are before thee, whatever temptations thou meetest with to turn thee aside out of the right way, whatever doubts hence arise in thine heart, *I shall one day or other perish from the way, and be a lost sheep at last*; yet his conduct shall be prosperous, and the event shall be sure; he shall so guide thee by his Counsel, that he shall bring thee to glory. *He shall gather his Lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.*

4. *As a Spirit of Comfort and Consolation,* he is so called, *John 16. 7.* The Comforter. *If I go not away [the Comforter] will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you.* He shall come unto them, and abide with them, to supply the absence of their Redeemer, to support

support them under their affliction, to witness their Adoption, to seal them up unto the day of redemption, and to be the earnest of their inheritance, Ephes. i. 13, 14.

Joh. i. 16. 14. *He shall take of mine, and shew it unto you; (He shall take of mine:)* that is, not only of the Truths, those Treasures of Wisdom that are in me, (though that be specially intended) but of my Love, my Righteousness, my Holiness, and all those Treasures of Grace and Mercy that are laid up in me; whatever there is in me, that may stand you in any stead, yield you any relief, or support, the Comforter which I will send you, shall bring it down to you; he shall take my blood, and the pardons it hath purchased for you; my bowels, and the compassions that are working in me towards you; my prayers and intercessions I am offering up for you; he shall take of all those Treasures of Grace, and everlasting Consolations which are laid up for you with me: *He shall take of mine, and shew it unto you.* As much as you have in the world to afflict and amaze you, as little as you have of your own to comfort you, either in your hearts, or in your houses, or among your friends; he shall shew what I have for you to refresh you.

O Christians, a sight of Christ in our sorrows, in our fears, in our thickest darkness, what day-light would it bring in? When thou lookest into thine heart, and art astonished and confounded at what thou findest there, at the blindness and the hardness, the poverty and the emptiness, the guilt and the guile, the pride and the peevishness; the evil thoughts, the vile affections, the filthy lusts that are swarming and working in thee; when thou lookest into the world, and tremblest at what thou beholdest there; the malice, the craft, the power that is engaged against thee; the furious spirits, the fiery tongues, the fierce looks, the violent hands, that are flying upon thee, and the little relief the earth will afford thee; when thy heart faints, and dies within thee, at the
sense

sense of this woful and forlorn state; a sight of what thou hast in thy Lord presented to thee by his Spirit, *Look thee here, Soul, what thy Jesus hath sent thee down, a glance from his eye, a drop from his heart, a Mess from his Table; and all to tell thee, Yet I do not forget thee; behold the care I take of thee, the treasures I have for thee, to encourage thy love, and reward thy faithfulness. Oh! how will this make all thy darkness to depart, and turn the shadow of death into the morning?*

Thus is the holy Spirit given to the Saints, to be the light of their eyes, the death of their sins, the guide of their wayes, the stay of their hearts, to uphold their grace, and to maintain their peace; to subdue their enemies, or their fears; to secure them from temptations, or succour them when tempted; to wipe off their reproach, or make it their crown; to heal their diseases, or make them their cure; to help their infirmities, to work their works, to make their yoke easie, and their burthens light; to turn their sighs into songs, to form their groans into prayers, to send them up to their Lord, and bring down their returns; to comfort their hearts, to establish, strengthen, settle them, that they be neither offended at the chain, nor moved from the hope of the Gospel.

CHAP. IV.

The Earth in the Covenant.

IV. **G**Od hath put the Earth into the Covenant. Though the Saints have not their reward in this life, their portion in this world, yet this world also is theirs, Mat. 5. 5. *The meek shall inherit the earth, 1 Cor. 3. 22. Things present, and things to come, all are yours.*

1. The good things present.

2. The evil things present.

1. *The good things present. Mark 10. 30. Houses, and Bre-*

Brethren, and Sisters, and Mothers, and Children, and Lands, now in this time. Prov. 3. 16. Length of days are in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour. Houses, and Lands, and Riches, and Honour, where are they? Who are the poor of the World, the houseless, harbourless, and friendless? Who have wo, and want, and shame, and sorrow? who are Strangers and Pilgrims, dwelling in Tents, driven into corners, into dens and caves, hunted up and down upon the Mountains of the earth? To whom is hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness, but to the meek of the earth? Is this to inherit the earth? All theirs, when nothing theirs? yet they do inherit the earth, For,

1. They shall ever have *as much as will suffice them*, and that is as much as all. They shall not want any thing, but what they may want. *Your father knoweth that you have need of these things*; and he knows how much they need. More than needs, is more than enough; and more than enough, is a prejudice. Many men have too much, too much money, too much esteem, too many friends, more than they can bear; so much as to sink them, and drown them in perdition and destruction.

Christians shall have enough, they shall never be in such a needy state, but what is necessary for them in all the earth they shall have it: *The earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof*; and he hath said, *That those that seek him, shall not want any thing that is good, Psal. 34. 10.* If the whole world can supply them out of all its store, they shall be supplied.

2. What they have, they have *a better and farther title to*, than any others in the world. Though the Dominion be not founded in grace, yet by grace it is established. What they have, descends upon them not barely by providence, but by promise, *Heb. 1. 2.* Christ is *heir of all things*, and they are fellow-heirs with Christ. A little coming from the Promise, hath more in it, than the greatest

abundance that is only handed down by common providence; that which comes in from the promise, comes in with a blessing; if thou hast but a handful, thou hast a blessing in thy hand; if thou hast but a corner, thou hast a blessing in thy corner: a little from love, is a great blessing. Thou hast God in every morsel thou eatest, and in every drop that thou drinkest: a drop from heaven will turn thy Bran into the finest Flower, and thy water into wine.

O what serene and quiet lives, how void of care (distracting care) might the Saints live in the world! what are the burthens that do gall our backs? what are the briars that do tear our flesh? what are the thorns that pierce through our hearts ordinarily, but the cares of this life? *What shall I eat? what shall I drink? wherewith shall I be clothed? where shall I dwell? how little have I for to day? what for to morrow? what for hereafter? how shall I secure what I have? when this is gone, whence shall I be supplied?* Thus do we go on, piercing our selves through with many sorrows. Our cares for supply eat up what we have, our thoughts cut deeper than our wants; we cannot at so cheap a rate fear, as we often bear the want of all things.

And why take ye thought? The earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof; and he hath said, All this is yours, you shall Want nothing. You have not only your *Deus providens*, providence to live upon; you have also your *Deus promissus*, the promise before you, and this hath all things in it; all is yours: *What for to morrow? what for hereafter?* Why, what saith the Promise? *Thou shalt want nothing, neither thou nor thine: Never saw I the righteous forsaken, nor their seed begging their bread.*

Hast thou two Worlds made sure to thee, and canst thou want? thou maist as well whine, and make a pitiful cry at a full Table, *O where shall I have my next morsel?* as under such a full Promise, *O where shall I have my*

next Meal? O how much beneath the Spirit of Christianity are the carking anxious lives of too many Christians; you do not believe, you do not believe; you talk of your Covenant-right, of your part in the Promise; of living by Faith; but where is any such thing? can you trust God for your souls, and can you not trust him for your bodies, for your children? believe, and you will make as much, and be satisfied as well with a penny in the Promise, with a meal in the Promise, with an house in the Promise, as with a penny in your purse, or a meal in your Cupboard.

What dost thou get by all thy cares? *Which of you by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature?* one farthing to his store? If thou lose nothing by them, thou maist sure put all thy gains into thine eyes; tears and trouble are all they will add to thee. Be quiet, and nothing will ail thee; let not any straits sting thee before they are; want not before thou wantest; let not the Winters frost nip thee whilest it is yet Summer.

Know when thou art well, and be content. All is thine; if thou inheritest thy God, thou inheritest the Earth, nothing of all its store shall be kept back from thee, that is necessary for thee, only thou must not look to be thine own Carver, thy God will carve out what thou needest. Let enough suffice thee, and thou shalt never have too little. Thou shalt never have so little, but thou maist say, this little enough.

What if what thou wantest in water, be made up in Wine? If thou hast but little in Bran, but the more in Flower? A short meal with a smile from heaven, thou maist count no Fast, but a Feast; a little oyl in the cruse, how far will it go with a smile, the blessing of the Covenant? If the upper Spring run freely, thou maist abate a nether Spring.

Let my beloved comfort me with his apples, and stay me with his flaggons; and let the rest be as litle and as course

as it will. Let the promise be my portion, let the pipes be kept open to my soul, and then the least pittance for this carcass shall suffice me. O my Lord, let me feed with thee, and I will not quarrel whatever my fare be. Let my portion be from thy table, and then be it much or little. Let me hear thy voice, *I am thine, and with me all things*; and I am content to be at thy allowance. Let thy Deed of gift stand sure to me, put in my Childrens names there, and I ask no more for my self or them. Hold thy peace, keep silence, O my anxious soul, know when thou art well; *be in nothing careful, the Lord is at hand.*

2. *The evil things of this earth are theirs*: the Cross is in the Covenant, *Psal. 89. 34. If his children forsake my Law, and walk not in my judgments: if they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with a Rod, and their iniquity with stripes.*

1. *The Covenant hath its Cross.* The Doctrine of the Gospel is the Doctrine of the Cross, the preaching of the Gospel is the preaching of the Cross, *1 Cor. 1.* The Mysteries of a crucified Jesus, and of his crucified Saints, do fill up the whole *New Testament.* The cross is not only imposed upon the Saints, as their *burthen*, but bequeathed unto them as a *Legacy.* It is given unto them as an honour and privilege, *Phil. 1. 29. Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.* It is joyned with the most glorious gift; the gift of Faith. Yea, and it is a greater gift than this. To suffer in Faith, is more than barely to believe.

2. *By virtue of the Covenant the Cross is a Blessing.* The word is now charged; it is no longer cursed, but blessed is every one that hangeth on his Tree, *Mat. 5. 10, 11. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake; blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.*
Why,

Why, where is the blessedness? or wherein stands it? It stands in these things:

1. In the separation of the Cross from the Curse. |
2. In the sanctification of the Cross to its end.
3. In the proportioning of the Cross to their needs and strength.
4. In the special comforts of the Cross:

1. *The Cross is separated from the Curse.* There is something in this. To be able to say under the forest of afflictions, *This scourge is no scorpion*, this is no Curse, it is but a Cross. Our Lord bare both the Cross and the Curse together, and that made his Cup so bitter; but now he hath divided them, the Curse he hath left upon sinners, and laid only the naked Cross on the Saints. The Crosses of Reprobate sinners are all curses. Every affliction is a Curse, there is wrath in all their sufferings, there is venom upon every arrow, there is vengeance in every dart, every Rod is a Serpent to them. Thou that art of the number of Christs implacable Enemies, when he comes to fall upon thee, and to grind thee under his hand, thou wouldst have a word of comfort to be spoken to thee in thy sorrow; no, no, there is no comfort can be spoken; thou maist say of every dart he smites thee with, *This is sent of God*, to revenge himself upon me: The crosses of the impenitent are all curses, but the Saints curses are all come to be but crosses. Though men curse, the Lord will not curse; whatever troubles come upon thee, though there be vinegar in them, yet there is no venom in them; though there be anguish in them, yet there is no wrath in them; though they be ill-look'd, yet there is no ill-will in them; they come upon no ill intent, nor shall have any evil issue. The smitings of the wicked are to thee, as the smitings of the righteous were to the Psalmist, a precious Balm, *Psal. 14. 5. Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness, it shall be an excellent oyl; it shall not break mine head.* And thou maist say, Let the

wicked smite me; smite me with the tongue, with the fist of wickedness, or what they will, it shall not break mine head, much less mine heart; it shall be a kindness to me, *an excellent oyl.*

2. *The Cross is sanctified to its ends.* It hath many holy and excellent ends, and it shall prosper, it shall accomplish its ends. The cross is laid on the Saints, sometimes to prove them, sometimes to reprove them, to humble them, to purge them, &c, and what ever it is sent to them for, it shall not return in vain. *As the word, so the rod shall accomplish that for which he pleases that sent it. By this the iniquity of Jacob [shall] be purged.*

3. *The Cross is proportioned to their needs and strength,* Jer. 30. 11. *I will correct thee in measure, but I will not leave thee altogether unpunished.* Just so much as will serve shall suffice; the wise Physician hath respect both to the need, and the strength of the Patient, Isa. 57. 16. *I will not contend for ever, neither will I always be wroth; lest the spirit should fail before me, & the souls which I have made.* The Apostle tells the Saints, Heb. 10. that they have need of patience; and their experience tells them, they have need of something to exercise their patience. And their needs are different, some are knotty pieces, and need more; others are tender, and upon them less will serve. The stubborn child must have more stripes; the shaking of the Rod will do more on some spirits, than the smart of it on others, but all need something. Let him only that is without sin, say, *I have no need of shame and sorrow.* The Lord will neither over, nor underdo; every one shall have his load, and no more. No more than they can bear, and no less than their need requires. The Lord delights not in his Childrens tears, he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men; but yet he had rather they cry than perish. Wonder not Christians, that your tender Lord puts you to pain, and that your pains are so sharp, and so many; *Your heavenly Father*

Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. It is a mercy that he will chastise, you may put your corrections among your mercies. His breakings of you are his blessings, his woundings are your cures; and by when own as by your Lords stripes, you are healed. And you shall review and read over all his darker providences, and behold the wisdom, tenderness, which is tempered with his severities, evidenced in his laying on so much, and yet no more than was needful, you will then write down with the Psalmist, Thou in very faithfulness hast afflicted me.

*O my Lord, let me not want thy Staff nor thy Rod; neither a friend nor an enemy, neither a calm nor a storm, neither food nor medicine: If any disease be too strong for my Physick, let me have yet a stronger potion; if my wanton heart will not yet be tamed, put on more Fetters, an heavier load, load upon load, weight upon weight, and till thou seest, let me never say it is enough. Let me never be sick of my remedy, till I be cured of my disease. Let me rather suffer by the hand of a Devil, than perish by the hand of a Lust. Spare not Lord, cease not Lord, to smite thy servants, till thou hast thereby smitten down all mine enemies. Peace, Plenty, Ease; what, that I may have to spend upon my Lusts? to wax wanton against my God? *hanc pacem nolo.**

Pain, Trouble, Want, any thing, rather than Peace upon such terms. Correct me, O Lord, yet in judgment, but not in thy fury, lest I be consumed and brought to nothing.

4. The Cross hath its special comfort, 2 Cor. 1. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith our selves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our Consolation also abounds by

Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings, which we also suffer; or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation: and our hope of you is steadfast; knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.

The comforts of the Cross are often the sweetest and the fullest, that the Saints ever taste on this side the Crown. The first draught is often bitter, the *Green Cross* is heavy, and it is necessary it should be so. As it is with some Medicinal Waters, it works by its weight; it must be an heavy yoke that will tame an unruly neck; if it gall not, it will not heal; 'tis the smart of the Rod that stills the child. Think not your burdens will lie easie, when first laid on, and think not much if they do not. The first conflict with Temptations, may put you to an harder brunt than you are aware. It must be so, that it may be for your good afterward. So my Physick will work, I am content it make me sick. Tribulation worketh Patience; that it cannot do, unless it pains. It is observable that it is not said, that the Cross worketh Patience, but the *Strikes*, the tribulation, the pinching of the Cross, or the pain the Cross puts us to; this is patience, a quiet bearing that pain, which the flesh when touched puts us to. When we [feel] the Thorns and the Nails, when the Iron enters into our *souls*, when it pricks and smarts, then it will work. The *Green Cross* is heavy; a prison, or a wilderness, will look uncouth at the first; but when your Lord comes in and visits you, then the sweet, the pleasure comes: and the more frowns at the threshold, the more kisses you may expect afterwards; Christ doth not always meet his Saints in the Porch; the Devil's Parlour, the inner Prison, is his banquetting house, the Dungeon, his Wine-celler, there they drink and are satisfied. The Stocks and the Rack, are the Organs that makes them the sweetest Musick. Many a
Saint

Saint hath been sadly disappointed at the first, hoping to meet with Christ at the door; but behold! a dreadful sight; behold, sin lieth at the door; all his sins, all that ever he did against Christ, all his unthankfulness, unfaithfulness, unkindness, rebellion against his Lord, stand forth and stare him in the face. Christians, beware of sin now, it will meet you in the day of adversity, the Cross will tell you all that ever you did. *I remember my faults this day*; now I remember all my pleasant things, my Sabbaths, my Ordinances, my Liberty, the dear society I once enjoyed, but trifled and wasted away; O my pride and my wantonness, my idleness, my earthliness, my hypocrisy, wherefore are you come thus to affright and torment me? Lord, whither am I come? O how dreadful is this place? Is this my Prison-entertainment? Are these my prison-comforts? O what an hard lodging am I like to have with such companions? O the wormwood and the Gall! a dark habitation, a bitter Cup indeed is now given unto me. Is this the comfort of the Cross? Are these the sweets so much talked of? Yet be not dismayed, as roughly as thou art handled at the door, it is better within, the Devil is going out in this storm, thy sins meet thee now, but it is only to shake hands and part; after this agony, expect the Angels to come and minister to thee. Complain not if thou yet find no sweets, thou hast not drank deep enough; the next draught, the Sugar may come; in the next Room thou maist meet thy Lord; and then tell me, if it be short of all that hath been told thee.

But shall I give you a more particular view of some of the special comforts of the Cross, or our sufferings for Christ? I shall only first premise a word, to let you understand what I mean by the sufferings of Christ. We then suffer for Christ, *when we suffer for Christs cause*, when we suffer because we will be Christians, we will be holy and righteous; when we suffer because we will

not

not sin; and when we suffer upon *Christs Call*, when he cuts out a Cross for us, and lays it on. Then Christ calls us to suffering, when he puts us to this choice, *Either to suffer or to sin*; when our backs or our consciences must suffer, when we must suffer, or he must suffer by us. *If any man will be my Disciple, let him take up [his] cross.* Christ is not, and Christians must not be prodigal of their blood, their blood is his, their estates, their names, their liberties are all his, and to him they must be accountable how they part with them. It is not every cross that thou canst call [thy] cross; we must not leave our way to seek a cross, when a Christ hath laid a cross athwart a Christians way that he should go, and he must either make a stand or turn aside, or submit his neck to it; then he sayes, *There is [thy] cross, take it up, and get thee gone.* Whatever cross is before thee, if thou hast a way open to avoid it without sin, that is none of thy cross, thou maist not take it up; or if thou dost, thou wilt have no thanks for thy pains.

Christians should be wary here. Though it be an argument of a gracious spirit, to be always of a ready and forward mind to suffer for Christ, and when he demands, *Who will go with me? who will bear my cross?* cheerfully to answer, *I will go, Lord let me bear it,* yet should we take heed, that as we hang not back, when he sayes, *Go*, so that we run not before he send us. Though it be a high honour to suffer for the Gospel, yet *no man taketh this honour upon himself, but he that is called of God.* I would not go to a Prison without a *Mittimus* from Heaven, lest if my suffering be of my self, I be there left to shift for my self. If Christ should meet me in Prison or in Banishment, and demand of me, *What dost thou here*, Elijah? Friend, *how camest thou in hither?* What should I say, if I could not say this, *Thou, Lord, hast brought me hither? my conscience, my duty hath brought me in?*

But

But understand me here with this caution, That when the *cause* for the main is *Christ*, but the *call* seems doubtful; yet when the sufferer hath carefully enquired the mind of God, truly follows the dictates of conscience, sincerely designs the honour of Christ and his Gospel, although he should err in some circumstances of his case, and for fear of iniquity should chuse affliction, when possibly he might have avoided both: God will surely wink at his mistakes, own his sufferings, and greatly accept and reward his readiness of mind.

Yet still take heed of careless or wilful errors: take heed of preparing nails for thy own cross; thorns, scourges, spears, for thine own head or heart. Take heed both how thou shunnest, and how thou espoucest a suffering state.

Go not in upon heedless mistakes; go not in for good company, much less upon any carnal designs; let not thy pride, or ostentation, or the byass of any fleshly respects lead thee into the house of correction, lest thou find them the rods to lash thee when thou art there.

Christians consider, if there be not sometimes some uncomfortable miscarriages in this matter: and whether it hath not been the lot of some of Christs (with how much justice or charity let the Lord be judge) to be censured and reproached for unfaithful, or fearful, upon no other account but for walking by this rule, *not to go to Prison without a warrant*, that is, not to cast themselves into a suffering state, whilst God hath left a way open to escape, without sin. I confess the more dangerous, and the more ordinary error is on the other hand; we are more apt (especially when afflictions are more sharp, and bite in earnest, and then will be the great tryal) rather sinfully to shift our selves of them, than unwarrantably to run our selves upon them; but yet let it be considered, whether here be not an error on this hand also.

It is true, where the cause is the same as to the main,
different

different circumstances may make that to be one mans sin, which is another mans duty ; yea, that may be a duty to the same man at one time, which (supposing him in differing circumstances) might have been his sin at another. And it is not seldome (through the unavoidable difference of our apprehensions, and the difficulty of discerning our cases) that Christians equally careful to know and to do the will of God, when the case and the circumstances also are mostly the same, do judge differently about their call to suffering. Here let no man be so tyrannical to others, as to expect that they should go cross to their own, to comply with their Brethrens judgments and consciences. Let us not put one another on this unmerciful necessity, either to break our peace with God, or our friends. Let it be sufficient to us, faithfully to follow our own light, without judging or quarrelling with those that are otherwise minded. Beware of bitterness. Be not cruel to consciences, smite not with the tongue, nor let an evil thought arise in thine heart, upon any such account as this. Thine arrows will recoil, and fly back in thine own face. Blemish not thine own sufferings by blasting thy Brothers liberty. Let not the wariness of some be condemned for cowardise, nor the forwardness of others, for pride or hypocrisie ; but let us be cloathed with humility, let us put on a spirit of self-suspicion, and charity to our Brethren ; and let this Christian frame be the more studiously maintained, by how much the more our differing practises, according to the variety of our apprehensions, seem to condemn each other, and so provoke to uncomfortable schisms and contentions, and by how much the more pernicious such schisms are like to prove in the issue.

These things premised, I shall now shew you what the special comforts of the Cross are. You may expect your suffering state to be sweetned with,

1. *A more plentiful diffusion of special Grace.* Grace is

a comfort : 'tis never better with the Saints, than when that flourishes. The joy of the harvest is howling to the joy of Grace ; he is not a Christian that cannot say, *'Tis Summer* when these flowers appear in their beauty. Flourishing Faith and Love have their glorious joyes. *1 Pet. 1. 8.* The Springs of Grace, are a resurrection from the dead ; and there is no such Spring as after a showre. Oh how green do the herbs then look ! the withering Flowers do then lift up the head ; never so many Stars appear, nor with such lustre, as in a frosty night ; grind the Spices, and their fragrancy flows out. Saints are never more Saints, than in the House of Bondage, or the Land of their Pilgrimage ; our Winter weather makes us warm at heart. *As our outward man perishes, our inward man is renewed day by day, 2 Cor. 4. 16.* Persecution is the time of life. *We are delivered to death for Jesus sake, that the life also of Jesus might be manifest in our mortal flesh, 2 Cor. 4. 11.* Decayed soul, comfort thine heart, the Cross comes ; now thou shalt live, now thou shalt recover. This weakness will strengthen the things that remain, and are ready to die. Now Faith, and Love, and Patience, and Courage, that have so long hung the wing, now lift up the head, the day of *your redemption draweth nigh* ; this night is your day of hope.

2. *A more clear Revelation of special love. Lovest thou me, Lord ?* there's enough. Let me hear thy voice, let me see thy face.

Kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth. Thy loving kindness is better than life ; send forth thy light, and thy truth, let these tell me thou lovest me. Thy love-sick Spouse is sick for love ; O when wilt thou say, *Thou knowest that I love thee* ? Why, come up with me on the Cross, that withered tree bears more blossoms of Love, than all the green trees of the field. The whole Gospel is hung upon the Cross. Where our Lord hung, there is snail'd,
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the Curse vacated, Death vanquished ; Pardon, Peace, Joy, Glory, shewed forth in open sight. There is love with all its tokens, rouse and take. Fear not go be baptised with thy Lords Baptism, nor to drink of his Cup ; this Cup also is the Communion of the blood of Christ. Come with me into the Wilderness, there will I speak comfortably to thee. When thou most wantest it, where thou wilt most value it, there will I shew thee my loves.

Our Lord loves not to have love slighted. The full soul loaths the honey-comb, thou hast yet too many Lovers to bid thy Lord welcome, he keeps his best Wine till all thine own be soured, then it will relish, and then thou shalt have it. His oyl is for thy wounds. The child never knows so much of the Parents heart and bowels, as when it is sick or in distress ; then every look is love, every word is pity and compassion. O the founding of Christs Bowels towards his swooning Children ! when thou knowest hatred, then look to know love. When thou art persecuted, when thou art cast out, and trodden under foot of men, then will he take thee in, and cherish thee.

3. *A more full manifestation of glory.* There is not a prison into which the Saints are cast, but hath a Window in the Palace. Calvary becomes a Tabor, where they have a sight of their Lord in his Glory. Golgotha becomes a Pisgah, where they may look over Jordan into the Land of Promise. Hast thou known little of Heaven ? thou hast not yet been in the deep.

Of Stephen the first Gospel-Martyr it is said, Acts 7. 55. *He looked up steadfastly into Heaven, and saw the Glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.* And Chap. 15. *All that sate in the Council saw his face, as the face of an Angel.* Such an admirable splendor and security in his countenance, as spake him rather an Angel than a man. O what an Heaven was there within,
that

that cast out such a Divine lustre on his face ! His joy was too big for his heart, his face must have its share ; yea, his very adversaries, at second hand, behold the Glory of God.

He looked up and saw heaven opened. Looking down he might see hell opened, all his Tormentors about him, the Jaws of Death ready to devour and swallow him up : *But looking up, he saw Heaven opened, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.* O there he is, for whose sake is all this. My beloved, my beloved is yonder. Behold the Region of Light, whither this dark Tempest is wasting me : his Hell and his Heavenn meets, but the light swallows up the dark. Hell ceases to be Hell, where Heaven appears to be Heaven. This is the portion of suffering Saints. When you read what is written of those Armies of Martyrs that have gone before ; of their unspeakable joys, their undaunted courage, their admirable boldness ; of their cheering their friends, confounding their foes, their rejoicing in their stripes, singing in their stocks, leaping in their chains, boasting of their bonds, kissing their stakes, imbracing the flames, riding up in triumph in their Chariots of fire, not repenting of their Faith, nor the accepting of deliverance ; what doth this speak, but that their Eyes, as well as their Anchor, are within the Vail, whither Christ their fore-runner is gone before them ? O who would not be with them ? Who would fear sufferings ?

Soul, what art afraid of ? whither art thou running ? from what art thou hiding thy self ? what is thine ease, or thy liberty, or thy quiet ? why so loth to loose from this shore ? lanch forth into the deep. Fear not transportation into thine house of Bondage ; when thou art once there, 'tis but looking up, and thou art in Paradise.

Such are the sufferings of Christ. This is the Cross of the Covenant.

4. In sum, as that which comprehends all the rest,

a more manifest exhibition of Christs special presence, Jer. 30. 11. *I am with thee to save thee; Isa. 43. 2. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, & through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee, when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.* Through fire and water thou must go, *We went through fire and water into a wealthy place;* but whither ever thou goest, he will go with thee. When the Bush was on fire, the Lord was in the Bush; when the three Children were in the Furnace, the Son of God was there with them. *Isa. 63. 9. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, he saved them by the Angel of his presence, in his love, and his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. Though all men forsook me, the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, 2 Tim. 4. 16, 17. The Saints shall never have this to charge upon the Lord, I was in prison, and thou visitedst me not.*

He is ever with them, to bear their burthens, and to ease their shoulders; to plead their cause, and maintain their innocence; to wash their stripes, to wipe off their rears, to heal their wounds, to bind up their broken bones, to revive their weary spirits, to perfume their prisons, to lighten their Dungeons, to lead them in their wandrings, to converse with them in their solitudes, to give down from above, in divine Smiles, in illapses of spiritual joyes, assurance of dearest love, tenderest care, melting sympathy, gracious acceptance, to give down from above whatever is wanting beneath. In fine to preserve them from falling by the presence of his grace, till he present them faultless before the presence of his glory. *O it's good being with Christ any where.*

Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, and causest thy flocks to rest at noon. Where thou feedest? yea, where thou [art,] whether feeding or fasting, whether rejoicing or mourning; where thou causest thy flocks to rest at noon; yea, and where thou sufferest

suffered thy flocks to be scattered in the night. Where thy flocks are, thou art not far away ? tell me where thou feedest, tell me where thou art. My beloved that feedeth among the Lillies, feedeth sometimes among the Thorns. When his Love is a Lilly among Thorns, there he feedeth. He feedeth among the Thorns, he feedeth with his Sheep, he feedeth with his Lambs where-ever they feed ; when darkness, and desolation, and devils, and death feed upon them, even when he feedeth them, and takes his feeding with them.

O where-ever my Lord is there let my lot fall. Let me dwell amongst the Thorns, so my dwelling be with my Lord amongst the Lillies. Let me wander amongst the Mountains, whilst he is with me telling all my wandrings. Let me be scourged, so he will wash my stripes ; Let me weep, so he will wipe off my tears ; I would not want wounds, whilst I have such oyl to pour in. Come all ye Thieves and Robbers, I fear you not, my dear *Samaritan* comes by ; come ye Bulls of *Bashan*, ye Boars of the Forrest, let my Beloved kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, and I regard it not, though you kick me with the heel. O my Lord, bring me where thou feedest ; let me live in thy face, let me feel thy smiles upon my heart, let me love thee, tell me thou lovest me, remembrest, pitiest, acceptest, takest care for me, and therichuse my condition, my dwelling, and entertainment for me.

Fainting Christian, lift up thine eyes, comfort thine heart ; here is that thou fearest and tormentest thy self withall. Here is the inside of that formidable Cross, the light side of those dark clouds, the Sunny side of that shady Thorny hedge that so wounds and afflicts thine heart. Fear not, be strong and of a good courage. Thou still saist, who is me, I can find no such thing. *Ab, Lord God, doth he not speak Parables ?* O that I were assured it might be thus with me ; Why art thou in Covenant ?

Believe, and all is thine. I believe, and therefore have I spoken; believe, and thou shalt see the salvation of God; as sure as the Cross is thine, all the comforts of the Cross are settled upon thee. Read over all the gracious words thou hast before thine eyes; view over all the instances of suffering Saints that have gone before thee, on whom these good words have been made good; in conspicuous increases of Divine Grace, in the signal discoveries of Divine Love, in the clearest and fullest Revelation of Divine Glory, in the intimate sense of the Divine Presence, quickning, enlarging, encouraging, supporting their spirits in the darkest Dens, in the sharpest Conflict, with Reproaches, Mockings, Bonds, Banishments, Torments, and Deaths; and know that all these things are written for thy learning, that thou through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, mayst have hope.

Read over Isa. 51. *Hearken to me ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord, look unto the Rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged; for the Lord shall comfort Sion, he will comfort all her waste places; he will make her Wilderness like Eden, and all her Deserts like the Garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, Thanksgiving and the voice of Melody, lift up your eyes to the Heaven, &c. Ver. 7, 8, 12, 13. Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my Law, fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings; for the Moth shall eat them up like a Garment, and the Worms shall eat them like Wooll, but my Righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from Generation to Generation. I, even I am he that comforteth you; who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass? and forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that hath stretched forth the Heavens, and laid the Foundations of the Earth; and hast feared continually every day, because*

because of the fury of the Oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy; and where is the fury of the Oppressor? I, even I am he, &c. And where is the fury of the Oppressor? Where is the fury of the Oppressor? Where is it not rather? Is it not in the house, and in the field? Is it not in the City, and in the Villages? Is it not upon my Cattle, upon my Purse, upon my Body, upon my Children, upon my Friends? Where is not the fury of the Oppressor? I, but when thou remembrest the Lord thy Maker, the Oath, the Promise, and Covenant of God, the Presence, Protection, and Comfort of thy God, when thou remembrest this, then, Where is the fury of the Oppressor?

CHAP. V.

The Angels of Light in the Covenant.

V. **T**He Angels of Light are in the Covenant; Heb. 1. 14. *Are they not all Ministering Spirits, sent forth for them who shall be heirs of Salvation?* Whilest our Lord himself was sent down to Minister, behold his servants are to be ministered unto, the Angels are made their Ministers, Psal. 91. 11. *He shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways: they have received a charge, and they have great advantages for the keeping the charge of the Lord.*

1. *They are mighty, Psal. 103. 20. Bless the Lord ye his Angels, that excel in strength.* An Angel is more than an Army; what slaughters have the Angels made in the Armies of the Aliens? an hundred fourscore and five thousand *Assyrians* are slain by one Angel of the Lord, when encamped against *Judah*, Isa. 37. 36. *It is hard service indeed, that is too hard for an Angel.*

2. *They are numerous, there are great multitudes of*

them. *Psal. 68. 17. Thousands of Angels, a multitude of the Heavenly Host, Luke 2. 13.* An Angel is more than an Army ; but what then are an Army of Angels ?

3. *They are faithful:* They can do much for the Saints, but will they do it ? yes, they are faithful ; *They do the Commandments of God, Psal. 103.* God bids them keep, and they are faithful, they will keep his sheep ; we are taught to pray, *That the will of God may be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven ;* that men may be faithful as the Angels of God.

4. *They are Favourites,* they behold the face of God, they dwell in his presence, they are admitted to stand before his Throne, they can be heard ; they have favour in Heaven, and therefore such power on earth, *Mat. 18. 10. Take heed ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven.*

Touch not mine anointed, let alone my little ones, take heed how you offend them, their Angels are before my Father, and are mighty with him, to engage his power for their aid and deliverance.

O the great security of the least of Saints ; These *Mighty ones*, these *Multitudes*, these *Faithful ones*, these *Favourites of Heaven*, the holy Angels of God, have all received a charge from the Lord, to preserve and defend them ; *Lord open their eyes that they may see. Behold the Mountains full of Chariots and Horses of fire round about Eliza, 2 King. 6. 17.*

Should a mighty Prince commit any subject of his to a potent and faithful Life-guard, with this charge : Look to this man, keep him in safety, see that he come to no harm ; whoever offends, do you defend him ; where-ever he goes, go you with him ; where-ever he lodges, stand you as a Guard about the house, while he sleeps do you watch ; see that he want for nothing, nor hurt come to him : If this were thy case, in what great security wouldst

wouldst thou count thy self ? But O, what is a Life-guard of men, to a Guard of mighty Angels? Fear not little flock, in Heaven your Angels behold the face of God, and in Earth have they pitched their Tents round about you.

CHAP. VI.

The Powers of Darknes delivered over in the Covenant.

VI. **T**He Powers of Darknes are delivered over in the Covenant; Satan and all his Instruments. We are naturally in bondage to Satan, *held captive by him at his will*, 2 Tim. 2.26. His prisoners, his slaves, his vassals. By the blood of the Covenant, the Lord hath brought forth his Prisoners, and redeemed his Captives, Zach. 9. 11. and also hath spoiled *Principalities and Powers and led captivity captive*. In this Covenant there is deliverance of the prisoners, and a delivery over of them by whom they were held; *a Goal-delivery, and a delivery of the Goalers too*, into their hands; and they are delivered over bound to the God of this world in chains, limited, spoiled, banished, and cast out, Mat. 16.18. *The gates of Hell shall never prevail against it*. The Gates of Cities were anciently their special strength, and in them were their great Councils held, for the contriving and managing of all their concernments: By *Hell*, understand the whole *Infernal Corporation*, all that belong to that dark Region, Satan and all his Instruments, the Dragon with his Armies, the Serpent and all his seed. By the *gates of Hell*, understand the power and policy, the combination and counsels of Satan and his whole party. These gates of Hell shall not prevail against it; that is, *against the Church*, neither against Head, or any member of it; they shall not prevail, that notes two things.

1. *They shall fight against it; they are all combined and lifted against the Church, making a War upon it: Raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof, Down with it root and branch, let it not have a being, let it not have so much as a name under Heaven:* Particular quarrels there may be betwixt Devil and Devil; *Herod against Pilate, and Pilate against Herod;* yet the tails of these smoking fire-brands are united against the Lord and his anointed Ones; against their Profession, against their Religion, against the soul of every Saint. Whatever vails or specious pretence they varnish their quarrel with, this is it that lies at the bottom of all, their counsels and machinations, wherein all their aims are centred to root out godliness, and the Professors of it, out of the earth; to deceive and destroy souls for ever.

3. Though they shall fight against them, yet *they shall not overcome.* They shall not prevail against it; that is, not finally, in the end the victory shall be the Saints, *Zach. 12. 3. Jerusalem shall be a burthensome stone to all people.*

1. Such a stone that they shall not be able to lift, or move it out of its place; it shall stand as a Rock, against which the impetuous waves may dash themselves, but they cannot move it.

2. They shall not be able to bear it. It shall crush them that burthen themselves with it; those that shake the Church, they are pulling an house about their ears, a Rock upon their loyns; it shall break the backs of all those that contend against it; they shall be cut in pieces (saith the Text) that burthen themselves with it; though all the earth, yea, and Hell too, be gathered together against it. It is a vain design that Satan and his partakers are driving on, *Psal. 2. 1. Why do the Heathens rage, and the people imagine [a vain] thing?* It is a vain design and it is a fatal design to themselves: *Thou shalt break them*

them with a Rod of Iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a Potters Vessel.

Gen. 3. 15. In the first dawning of this glorious day-light, it's promised, that the seed of the Woman shall break the Serpents head. *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

Joh. 12. 31. *Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out.*

Cast out, whence? Why, cast out of his Kingdom, out of his Hold, cast down from his Throne and Dominion. His Prison is broken, and now the prey is taken from the strong, the Captives of the Mighty are taken away.

But how was this now done, at the death of Christ, to which these words refer? Doth not Satan still reign? Is he not still the god of this world, and the Prince of the power of the air? Yea, what hold hath he yet of the Saints that are in the earth? what a tyrant is he to them how doth he entangle and ensnare them? what h wock doth he make in their conscience? lording it over them, leading them captives by lusts and temptations; what a strong party hath he still within them, bearing Arms against their Lord, fighting against their souls? What sad spoil doth he make upon their grace, upon their peace? they cannot rest for him day nor night, abroad nor at home, alone nor in company; he is ever following them, whither ever they go, the Devil is at their backs; they cannot pray, nor read, nor spend a thought, nor cast a look, nor dispatch a sigh towards the Lord, but Satan stands by to resist and hinder them: What a yoke hath he still upon their neck? what clogs and weights hath he still upon their loyns? how do they mourn in their souls, whilst he vexes them from day to day? how do they groan, and travel in pain, sighing in themselves, and waiting for their redemption? How is it then said, Now is he cast out? Why, now he hath received his judgment; the Prince of this world is judged,

John 16. Now is the fatal blow given, now is the Serpents head broken, though he still may bruise and hang in the Saints. The blow he levelled at our Lord, hath rebounded on his own head. Though he be as *God, a Serpent in the way*, yet you may now *tread upon this Serpent*, and it shall not hurt you. The strong man is now bound, if he be a God still, he is a God in chains, a Prince in fetters; he must ask leave of your Father, ere he can touch one hair of your heads. He cannot tempt you, nor cast a bank against you, nor shoot an arrow at you, without a Commission from Heaven. *The Devils are subject to you.* He cast out, and in your Lords Name you may cast him out. *In my Name shall ye cast out Devils*; out of possessed bodies, out of possessed souls, you may be instruments to bring many a soul to repentance, *that they may recover themselves out of the snares of the Devil, who are held captive by him at his will.* Every sinner that is converted by you, you have cast out a Devil out of that soul.

Though he be an adversary still, yet such an adversary as may be resisted, *whom resist stedfast in the faith, 1 Pet. 5. 4.* And if you will resist, he shall flee from you, *James 4. 17.* Stand, and your enemy runs.

Nay more, he is not only a conquered Enemy, but made your servant. This Viper shall yield you medicine against his own poison. His smitings shall be an excellent Oyl; his Messengers he sends to buffet you, his thorns he sticks in your flesh, shall be a prevention of greater evils. The very destruction he intends to bring upon you, shall promote your salvation, *1 Cor. 5. 5. Deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.* Behold, the Devil is the Churches servant, and such a servant as in their present state they cannot well want. *The Executioner of their censures.* A Commonwealth may as well want a Jaylor, or an Hangman, as the Church a Devil. Behold, Satan divided against Satan; the Devil without, against

against the Devil within; the destroyer of souls, becomes the destroyer of Sin. *Deliver such an one to Satan [for the destruction of the flesh.]* Though much against his mind, his hand is against his own party. He's made to kill his own friends, which otherwise would kill the soul. Whether he will or no, the very Tormentor is made a Saviour, *that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.* Christians, as much as you feel of the Devils malice, you could ill want his service; there is many a soul lost and undone by a sleeping, that might have been recovered and roused by a raging Devil. His winds shall blow off your chaff, his floods shall wash away your filth, his earth-quakes shall open your Prison doors, his tempests shall drive you to harbor. Some men want a tempest to save them from a wrack.

Nay once more, he is not low enough yet, he shall be yet brought lower. You have assurance of his *total and final overthrow, Rom. 16. 20. The God of Peace shall tread Satan under your feet shortly. Rev. 20. 10. The Devil shall be cast into a lake of fire and brimstone.* 'Tis but a little while, and when he hath done his work, he shall be sent to his place, where he shall be shut up, and a seal set upon him; whence he shall come out no more for ever. He shall tempt no more, vex no more, deceive no more, destroy no more, torment you no more; he shall be thrust out, he shall be chained up; the Tormentor shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Stand, Christians, stand your ground a little while; follow your work, hold up your holy Profession, hold on your holy course; keep your hearts, keep your garments, keep on your armour, keep under corruption, resist temptation, bear your affliction; hold out faith and patience, fight against your adversaries, watch with your Lord, *this one hour*, and behold, he that shall come, will come; he cometh quickly, and he that is in the world shall

shall be consumed with the breath of his mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of his appearing. He shall be cast out, he shall be cast down, and rise no more for ever.

CHAP. VII.

Death in the Covenant.

VII. **G**OD hath put Death into the Covenant, 1 Cor. 3. 21. *Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, all are yours. Death! there is a great purchase, you'll say; what advantage is that? Yes Death is advantage: To die is gain. For,*

1. *The Commission of Death is changed; 'Twas once, Take him Jaylor, away with him, carry him down, to prison with him, there to be reserved to the Judgment of the great day: It is now, Take him Janitor, take him Porter, take him in, give him an entrance into his Masters Joy. Death doth but take the Bride when she is ready, and lodges her in the Chamber of the Bridegroom. This made Death the Apostles desire, Phil. 1. 23. I desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.*

2. *Death is conquered.* What doth this mean, *Your Enemy is yours?* other than this, Your Enemy is conquered to you; a conquered Enemy, is made a Tributary: Death is disarmed, it hath lost its sting: When a Serpent hath lost its sting, you may take it into your bosome.

He that can say, *Death, where is thy sting?* may go on, and add, *Thanks be to God, which hath given me the victory.* A Signet sent from Heaven, with a *Deaths Head*, is a precious token: Come Christians, be of good courage, set your feet on the neck of this King of Terrors.

3. *Death*

3. Death is at once *the destruction of all their enemies* ; when once Death hath done its office upon them, then farewell *Edom*, and *Ammon*, and *Amaleek*, and *Egypt* ; farewell the pricking Brier, and the grieving Thorn ; then farewell sin and sorrow for ever : the *Egyptians* they have seen, and feared, and felt to day, they shall never see again for ever. It *destroys it self*, their last Enemy by destroying them, it hath its *welcome* and *farewel* the same moment ; it is but *welcome Death*, and *farewel Death* for ever. Death dies with them ; once dead, they die no more for ever ; mortality is swallowed up of life, *Death is cast into the lake of fire* ; that is its Region, there, there they die, and die, and die again ; over and over, for ever and ever ; but for the Saints it doth but set them on the banks of that good Land, whither it cannot follow them : Our Lord by Death (by ours as well as his own) hath *delivered those who for fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage*.

Christians, you may now not only with *patience*, but with *desire*, expect the assault of this King of Terrours. What, shall tribulation, and persecution, and famine, and nakedness, and peril, and sword ? shall sorrows, and fears, and mortality die with me ? Yea, shall sin die with me ? then welcome death, Lord strengthen me this once, *let me die with the Philistines*. Would it be good for thee to be with thy Father ? in the bosom of thy Bridegroom ? the Presence-Chamber of thy Lord and Love ? would it be a mercy to thee to weep no more, fear no more, suffer no more, be tempted no more, sin no more ; to be uncloathed of corruption ; and be cloathed upon with immortality and incorruption ? Then bid Death welcome.

Blessed souls, when you come ashore, and see the light, the love, the joy, the rest, the glory that is on the other side, you will then more fully understand what this meaneth, *Death is yours*. He knew something, who
said,

said, *I cannot tell you what sweet pain, and delightful torments, are in Christs love; I often challenge time, that holdeth us asunder; I have for the present a sick life, much pain, and much love sickness for Christ; O what would I give to have a bed made to my wearied soul, in his bosome! O when shall we meet! O how long is it to the dawning of the marriage day! O sweet Lord Jesus, take wide steps: Come over the Mountains at one stride. O my beloved, flee as a Roe, or a young Hart upon the Mountains of separation! O if he would fold the Heavens together like an old cloak, and shew Time and Dayes one of the way, and come away!*

CHAP. VIII.

The Kingdom in the Covenant.

VIII. **G**OD hath put the Kingdom into this Covenant, *Mat. 5. 3. Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Luke 12. 32. It is your Fathers pleasure to give you the Kingdom; Glorious things are spoken of thee, O thou City of God.* I might here enlarge in describing the Glory of this Kingdom; but when I have said all, I must at last leave it *within the Vail*; and therefore shall only tell you from the Apostle, *1 Cor. 2. 9. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, &c. Eph. 1. 18. When by the Spirit of Wisdom, and Revelation, the eyes of your understandings are opened, ye shall know, what is the hope of his calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints.*

CHAP. IX.

All the means of Salvation in the Covenant, both outward and inward, in special, (the blessing of a new heart.)

LAstly, God hath put into the Covenant all the means of salvation, and all things on their part necessary to the obtaining the everlasting Kingdom.

1. All the *outward* means of salvation: *Ordinances* Words, Sacraments, and Prayer: *Officers*, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers, *Ephes. 4. 11, 12. 1 Cor. 3. 22.*

2. All the *inward* means of salvation. Every Grace, every Duty; their obtaining the one, and performing the other, and perseverance in both; these are all comprehended in the second part of that great Promise, *They shall be my people.* Which though it be properly the matter of their own stipulation, yet for this also the Lord himself undertakes.

You shall be my people. Two things are hereby signified:

1. *I will account you,* and reckon you *for mine.* You shall have the privilege and the blessing of my people. I will set you apart, and separate you to my self, out of all the Tribes and Kindreds of the earth; and will avouch you for my portion and peculiar possession. I will set you as the apple of mine eye, as a seal upon mine heart, and upon mine arm.

I will mark you out for the people of my love; of you will I take care, for you will I provide, with you are my delights, over you will I rejoyce, with you will I dwell and you shall dwell with me for ever.

2. I will not only reckon you for my people, but I will *undertake* for you, that you shall *consent* to me, accept of me, own me, follow me, and cleave to me as my people.

I will not only separate you to my self, but I will fashion you for my self, I will sanctifie you, and guide you, and teach you, and help you. I will fulfil in you all the good pleasure of my will ; I will work all your works in you. I will avouch you for my people, and you shall avouch me for your God. You shall love me, fear me, obey me ; I will keep you from falling, and preserve you to my heavenly Kingdom.

Particularly, The Lord hath promised to give them,

1. A new heart.
2. An heart to know the Lord.
3. One heart.
4. An heart of flesh.
5. An heart to love the Lord.
6. An heart to fear the Lord.
7. An heart to obey the Lord.
8. An heart to persevere to the end.

1. A new heart. *Ezek. 36. 26. A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.*

This new heart (I take it) is the *Genius* of all the following Graces; and therefore the less shall suffice to be spoken of it here. A new heart, that is, not *physically* new, in regard of substance, but *morally* only, in regard of qualities.

This new heart signifies both *another* heart, and a more *excellent* heart. 'Tis said of *Caleb*, *Numb. 14. 24.* that he had another heart. And this other heart is declared to be a more excellent heart than was in the rest of the people. Whilest they either followed not the Lord, or but haltingly, he followed the Lord fully, *Prov. 17. 27. A man of understanding, is of an excellent spirit.*

There is another heart, that is not a new heart. *Nebuchadnezzar* had another, but no new heart ; the heart of a beast, for the heart of a man; an evil heart grown worse; is not a new heart, but the old heart grown older.

We read *1 Sam. 10. 9.* that when *Saul* was anointed King, God gave [him] another heart ; this was a more excellent heart than he had before, *and yet not the heart here promised.* He gave to him another heart, that is, *the spirit of Government* ; the heart of a King, for the heart of a private person ; a more publick, raised, heroick heart ; the heart of a King, fitted for the station and office of a King.

The Excellencies of this new heart are not natural, but spiritual Excellencies, as will appear more in the handling of the particular graces promised ; and are such

as fit them for their new { state,
work,
reward.

1. For their *new state* ; Christians are made the children of God, vessels of honour, a Royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar people ; and God gives them an heart, answering to the dignity of their High Calling.

2. For their *new work* ; a Christian hath other work to do, than other men ; whilst their business lies all here below in this Earth, in their Fields and Vineyards, &c. Christians work lies *above*, with their God, and their Jesus ; and *within*, about their nobler, and immortal part ; their work is spiritual, and such is the heart that is given to them.

3. For their *new reward*. God intends better things to them ; a better portion, a better hope, better comforts, joyes, delights here, and a better inheritance hereafter ; and he prepares them better hearts, to receive these better things ; he will not put his new wine into old bottles.

The excellencies of this new heart may be reduced to these three :

1. A *new Light* ; discovering the dignity of their state, the spirituality of their work, the glory of their reward.

2. *A new Law*, or frame, or bent of spirit, inclining, disposing, and fitting them to all that which they are made for. And this is the meaning of Gods writing his Law in the heart. The Law written in the heart, signifies, not only the Law made known in the heart, but the heart made suitable to the Law, and adopted to the obedience of it. There is a kind of con-naturalness betwixt the new heart, and all that the Law requires.

3. *A new Power*, enabling them for their new work. We have all these mentioned in one Scripture, 2 Tim. I.

7. God hath not given us *a spirit of fear, but of Power, and of love, and of a sound mind.* [A sound mind] there's the new light, [a spirit of love] there's the new Law, or frame; and with these [a spirit of Power.]

In summ, this new heart is the divine Nature; the Image of God renewed; the life of God begotten, Christ formed in them. An heart after Gods own heart, containing in it all those Graces of the Spirit, wherein stands their likeness to God, and their capacity of serving, and enjoying of him. This is the heart the Lord will give.

A new heart will I give unto you.

Against all those glorious things promised before, it would be objected; *A Kingdom promised! glory, and honour, & everlasting blessedness granted! Alas, what is all this to me? to whom is it promised? or upon what terms? when I consider what is required, 'tis all one to me, as if there had been nothing promised.* The way to this blessedness is too narrow, the Gate is too strait for me ever to hope to enter. Whatever the price be, the strictness and severities of a Christian course, the very fore-sight of them does amaze, and confound me. Live a new life, deny myself, take up my Cross, follow Christ, spend my days in Fasting, and Praying, and Mourning; live by Rule, look to every step, to every word, to every thought, &c. all these things are against me. *A new life, a new course; if this be it, I shall never bear.*

Bear it. No man having tasted of the old, will endure this new way; for he saith, the old is better. 'Tis all one to me, as if there had been no Christ, no Gospel, no Kingdom promised, if it cannot be obtained upon other terms than these. I were even as good sit down as I am, and run the venture of what follows, as to feed myself with hopes of that which I see I can never obtain. If I do but move Heavenwards, the stream carries me down; if I do but take up a thought, make an Essay, set a foot forwards towards this new course, I find mine old things hang in my heels. My old customs, my old companions, mine old pleasures, and ease, and liberties, quickly pull me back. O what shall I do? I must be undone, I must be a lost and damned wretch. Fain I would be happy, but I cannot be holy. I dread, I often tremble to think of losing Christ, and the blessings of his Gospel; but this wretched heart is too hard for me, and will not come on towards it. I am ashamed, I am plagued to think, what I am like to lose, and for how little, but I cannot help it, the way is such, that this foolish heart will never endure it.

Why, hearken soul: the Lord that hath called thee to this new course, will give thee a new heart. And there is not any thing required in an holy life so irksome, and so contrary to thee; but this new heart is so fitted, and suited to it, that it will become easie to thee. Its pain will be pleasant, its severity will be liberty, its very drudgery (as thou countest it) will be a great delight. *Psal. 40. 8. I delight to do thy will, O God, thy Law is within mine heart.* And *Psal. 1. 2.* of the renewed soul its said, *His delight is in the Law of the Lord.* In the Original, his will, his heart is in the Law. The Law is in the heart, and his heart is in the Law. Gods will and his are the same. Whatever God bids him do, his heart bids him do, and his hand will never say his heart nay. He that delights in the Law, and as it is a Law, commanding such things, will never grudge to do what it commands.

Where 'tis a pleasure to be commanded, 'tis no pain to obey. Whatever work the Law cuts him out, it is work he loves. Bid him pray, bid him watch, bid him walk humbly with his God, 'tis work he loves, 'tis in his heart to do it. Bid a Saint draw nigh to God in any duty, 'tis as if you bid the hungry to eat, or the thirsty to drink, the naked to be cloathed, the Beggar to come for an alms, or the poor labourer for a dayes work. Bid a Christian to deny himself, to crucifie his flesh; 'tis the same as if you bid him, deny thine enemy, revenge thy self on thine enemy, such revenge is sweet: but O how pleasant is it to him to be called to a life of praise! to live above in the light, in the love, in the joy of the Lord! to be searching, and studying, and looking into, and admiring those everlasting treasures of spiritual and heavenly delights laid up in God! to behold his face, to live in his presence, and to dwell in the light of his countenance! It is true, there is some remaining difficulty and irksomeness in the sweetest works of Religion, as far forth as the heart is unrenewed, and is yet carnal: deny my self, mortifie lusts, forsake my companions, withdraw from iniquity! Why, what is this but to cut off my hand, to pluck out mine eyes, to tear my flesh? walk with God, seek his face, dwell in his presence? it is all one, as to bid me feed on the air, wander on the Mountains, dwell in the Wilderness; and as much pleasure can I find in the one as in the other. 'Tis so indeed, as far as thou remainest carnal; the Lord God and all his wayes are a *Wilderness, a Land of darkness* to thee; but as much as thou hast of this new heart, so much ease and pleasure thou wilt find herein.

Desponding Soul, thou saist, thou art yet ignorant, and hast little knowledge of the way of the Lord; but behold, a new light to lead thee. Thou art yet carnal, and thy heart is contrary, and ever quarrelling at it; but the new nature will end the old quarrel. Thou art weak
and

and impotent, the work is too hard for thee, if thou lovedst it never so well, but what will this be, when thou art endued with power from on high?

O Friend, wouldst thou indeed live this new life, get this new heart? But oh, there lies the difficulty; how or where shall I get it? Why, have recourse to the Covenant, there it lies for thee. But how shall I get it thence? why, hath the Lord promised to give it thee? take the word from his mouth, and put it into thine own; turn the *word of promise* into a *Prayer*. Doth he say [*I will give?*] Let thy soul answer, *give Lord*, give me this new heart. I am weary Lord, and thou art weary also of this wicked heart, at once ease thy self and me; Take away this and give me a better heart, Turn the word of promise into a prayer, and then turn the *word of Prayer*, into a *word of Faith*. He sayes (*I will give*) let thy Faith say (*thou wilt give*) I shall have it; since thou hast said, thy servant may also boldly say, *Thou wilt do it*. Thou wilt give me a better heart. Farewel my old sins, lusts, and companions; farewel mine old pleasures and wayes, now for Heaven in earnest, now welcome the strait Gate, the new and living way. Old things are past away, all things shall become new. Turn the word of promise into a prayer, turn thy prayer into a word of Faith, and God will turn the word of *Faith* into a *word of Command*, *Be it according to thy word*. Let there be a new Light, let there be a new Law, let there be a new Power; let there no more be a spirit of fear in this heart, but a spirit of Power, of love, and of a sound mind. And as when he said in the Creation of the great World. *Let there be light*, let there be a Firmament, let there be a Sun and Moon, *It was so*: so when he shall say, in the New Creation of this little World, let there be light, let there be love, let there be power; let us again make man in our image, after our own likeness; *It shall be so*: The Lord hath said, *I will*, let thy Prayer say,

Do it Lord. Let thy Faith say, Thou wilt do it, and God will say, Amen. So be it.

CHAP. X.

An heart to know the Lord.

II. **A** *N heart to know the Lord, Jer. 24. 7. I will give them an heart to know me.* The knowledge of God is the first excellency of the new heart. As in the old, so in the new Creation (as was said before) the first word is, *Let there be light.* There is not so glorious a pre-eminence of day above night, as of the knowledge, above the ignorance of God. As the Firmament without a Sun, as the body without an eye, so is the soul without knowledge. What this knowledge of God here promised is, will appear, if we consider,

Its { Object.
Act.

1. *The Object* of this knowledge is God, not only the *Nature*, or being of God manifested in his *Essential perfections*, his glorious Attributes, his Infiniteness, Eternity, Omnipotency, &c. In his *Personal Relations*, the subsistences in the Godhead; but God in Christ, God in Covenant; yea, the *whole mind and will of God*, all that which God hath revealed to us, as our duty or happiness.

God known in the heart, is the *whole Bible opened*; the Law opened, the Gospel opened; duties, comforts, privileges made manifest. *Christ opened* in his sufferings, in his satisfaction, in his spirit, in all the riches of his Glory, the whole mystery of Godliness revealed. The *Heart opened*, man made known to himself, all the depths of the heart; all the deceptions of the heart, all the faculties and powers of the heart; with their motions operations, inclinations, the Rectitude, or Obloquities of them.

them. *Heaven opened*, the Crown, the Kingdom known, everlasting rest, glory, honour, immortality brought to light. *Hell opened*, sin known, the Devil known, wrath, temptation, the Curse, Eternal fire known. All this, even all that God is, and all that he hath revealed in his Word and Works, are the object of this knowledge of God.

2. *The Act*. To know, is to apprehend, or understand God, and the things of God, Jer. 9. 24. *Let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he (understandeth) and knoweth me*. Ephes. 3. 18, 19. *That ye may comprehend with all Saints, what is the height, and length, and breadth, and depth, that ye may know the love of Christ*. This apprehension of God, doth not barely note our having received some natural or Metaphysical Notions of God, and the truths that are in him : But further it notes :

1. An *Approbation* of him ; an approving or liking the things that are excellent, Phil. 1. 9, 10. *That your love may abound more and more in knowledge, and in all Judgment, that ye may approve the things that are excellent*.

2. *Approbation*. The knowing of God as a reconciled God ; a God, and a God to me ; good, and good to me ; wise, and wise for me ; my Lord and my God. To know God in Christ, reconciled through Christ, propitious through Christ, this is saving knowledge. To know and not possess, to see, and not to eat, to know an angry God, a wrathful God, a God lost ; to know goodness, mercy, loving-kindness, compassion, all-sufficiency, and to have the heart recur, what is this to thee ? this is none of thine ; the damned thus know and die.

3. *Affection*. As Psal. 9. 10. *Those that know thy Name, shall trust in thee*. So those that know thy Name, will love thee, and fear thee, and rejoyce in thee, and bless thy Name ; to know and hate God, to know and contemn God, to know and fly from God, to know and blaspheme

and curse God, the Devils thus know and tremble.

But especially that which distinguishes this saying from common knowledge ; is,

Its { Power.
Savour.

II. *Its power*, the Knowledge of God is mighty ; my preaching was not weak, but mighty in you, 2 Cor. 13. it hath,

A Transforming { Power.

A Fructifying }

I. *A Transforming power*, 2 Cor. 3. 18. *We all with open face, beholding as in a Glass, the Glory of the Lrrd, are changed into the same Image.* Rom. 12. 2. *Be ye not conformed to this present world, but be ye transformed, by the renewing of your minds,* (by the renewing of your minds) the renovation of the mind, both is this change, and works it farther upon the whole soul, this new light is the new creature ; old things pass away, all things become new, where the mind is savingly enlightened ; God known in the soul, is God united to the soul ? Christ revealed in the heart, is Christ formed upon the heart ? there's life in this light, it is no other than the light of life. The knowledge of God comprehends in it, and is involved in, and spirits, and animates every grace and duty ; as the same soul in the eye sees, in the ear hears, in the palate tastes ; as the same juyce which is in the Olive fatness, in the fig-tree sweetness, in the Oak strength, in the Rose fragrancy, in the Lilly beauty ; So the same grace, which is in the mind, is light, in the heart, is love, holy desire, holy fear, holy joy, and one says, that as feeling is inseparable to all the Organs of sense ; the eye feels and sees, the ear feels and hears, the palate feels and tastes, the nostrils feel and smell, So Knowledge is involved in every grace ; Faith knows and believes, Charity knows and loves, Temperance knows and abstains, Patience knows and suffers, Humi-
lity

lity knows and stoops, Repentance knows and mourns, Obedience knows and does, Compassion knows and pities, Hope knows and expects, Confidence knows and rejoices; and therefore we believe, and love, and obey, and hope, and joyce, because we know. God gives us this knowledge as the eye of our souls, and by that eye, he enters with all his power and glory, *Ephes. 3. 19. That ye may know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fulness of God.* Day-light is not that light we receive by reflection from the Moon and Stars, at second hand; when the Sun is risen, and come in amongst us, then it is day; When the Sun of Righteousness is risen in the heart, there is the light of life; God is, and God dwells in this light, and where God dwells, every unclean thing vanishes; can Darkness dwell with the Sun? can Death dwell with Life? according to the measure of the Manifestation of God in us, so far forth is sin necessarily vanished. Thou art but the Carcass of a Christian, the light that is in thee is darkness, the Life that is in thee is Death, if thou be not in the whole man renewed, after the Image of him that created thee. If Christ be not formed in thy Heart, if the Love, the Humility, the Meekness, the Patience, the Compassion, the Holiness of the Lord Jesus be not begotten in thee; whatever thou knowest thou knowest nothing as thou oughtest to know; if thou hast all knowledge, and hast not Charity; and so, if thou hast all knowledge, and hast not Humility, Meekness, Holiness, thou art nothing; thou art but as sounding Brass, or a tinkling Cymbal. Doubting Christian, that complaineest of, and bewailest thine ignorance, and fearest that thou knowest not God, look upwards, where his Glory dwells; lift up thine eyes and see; or if thou canst not see, lift up thy heart for eyes; Lord, where dwellest thou? let me see thy face, shew me thy glory, pity thy blind, let the eyes of this blind be opened, and the tongue

of this dumb shall be loosed, and speak forth thy praise. Look upward, and yet thou seest not thy God, look inward; canst thou see his face in thy soul? canst thou see his Image on thy heart? canst thou behold in (this) Glass the glory of the Lord, and find thy self changed into his Image? Comfort thine heart, how short-sighted soever thou seemest to be, how dim soever thy candle burns, how weak soever in the knowledge of God thou complaineest thou art; thou hast seen God, thou hast seen his face in peace; God that commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into thine heart, and given thee the knowledge of his Glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

2. A *Fruelifying Power*; this Sun-shine makes a fruitful soil, Col. 1. 9, 10. My desire for you (saith the Apostle) is, *that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will: in all wisdom, and spiritual understanding: That ye might walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful unto every good work, and encreasing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power unto all patience, and long-sufferings, with joyfulness. And Phil. 1. 11. Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.* Full of light, and full of love, of faith, of patience, of humility; and fruitful in every good work, Mat. 23. 35. *A good man out of the good Treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things; an evil man out of the evil Treasure, bringeth forth evil things.* A good man hath a good treasure within him; a treasure of Heavenly Wisdom, of Divine Truth, a treasure of Light, God hath shined into his heart, He is filled with all the fulness of God. And what is laid up within, he brings forth without; an evil man hath an evil treasure, Satan hath been filling his heart, Acts 5. 3. *Why hath Satan filled thine heart?* the treasures of *Darkness* are there; a treasure of lust and lies; falshood and folly are found with him, these treasures of darkness within, brings forth darkness; dark souls,

souls, lead dark lives; their way is dark, their deeds are darkness; O how fruitful are sinners in their unfruitful works; *filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, &c.* Rom. I. 29, 30. Their hearts are full, and thereupon their mouths full, their eyes full, their hands full; mouths full of Curfings, eyes full of Adultery, hands full of violence, filled with all unrighteousness: *O generation of Vipers, how can ye being evil, (having such hearts) speak good things?* all is evil that comes from you, and how can it be otherwise? Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks: And in like manner, *O generation of Believers!* How can ye being good, but bring forth good things? Or how can you say, or think there is a treasure of Grace, a Fountain of light within, when no streams spring forth? Pennyury in the life, speaks no great plenty in the heart; the truths of God within you, are the *seed of God*, the good seed that he sows in his fields, where there is good seed sown in good ground, you will expect a fruitful harvest; a barren crop, speaks a barren soil, or no good seed sown there.

I John 2. 3. *Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments.* We know God, but are you sure of it? are you not mistaken? No, we are not mistaken, we know that we know him: But how do you know it? Why, how are trees known? *By their fruits ye shall know them.* How do ye know that this is indeed the Tree of Knowledge? Why, see what fruits are hanging upon it, we keep the Commandments; here is obedience growing, here is holiness, and righteousness, and mercy: Doubtless this is the right Tree, for behold all the Commandments, the two Tables hanging upon the boughs of it, and not broken, but kept and observed? We may as well say, Obedience is no Obedience, Duty is no Duty, Faith, and Love, and Humility, and

and Patience are not what they are, as that the Tree that brings forth this fruit, is not the Tree of knowledge : *We know that we know him, because we keep his Commandments* : Yea, and the Tree of Life too, both in one : *A Tree of Life to them that lay hold upon her, Prov. 3. 18.* Where these fruits are not found, where are nothing but shews, and sounds, painted fruits ; where are nothing but the fruits of unrighteousness, contention, strife, covetousness, sensuality and the like : he is very ignorant indeed, that is not able to say, whatever I am ignorant of, this one thing I know, that I know not God. Christian, boast not of what thou hast, but consider what thou doest, try thy head by thine heart, and thy heart by thine hand, judge of thy light by thy love, and thy love by thy life ; say not that God hath shined into thine heart, unless thy light shine, thy works shine before men : *The path of the Just shineth, Prov. 4.* It is but a *form of knowledge*, that brings forth but a *form of godliness* ; he that holdeth the truth in unrighteousness, hath not the truth in truth in him : thou saist thou knowest the Lord, but what say thy ways ? do these speak the same things ? Action is the best Interpreter of the Inner Man : feel the pulses of thy heart, what watchfulness, what holiness hath thy Knowledge brought forth ? Hast thou received the Spirit, who yet walkest in the flesh ? What, Heaven in thy heart, and nothing but Earth in thy hand ? Truth in thine heart, and lies in thy mouth ? Holiness in thy heart, Glory in thine heart, and in thy tongue nothing but filth or froth ? What, an heart so full, and a life so empty ? how can these things be ? hath the light in thine heart given laws only to thine heart ? or doth thy heart submit whilst thy tongue rebels, and thou kickest with the heel ?

Wo to us, Christians, that sinners should be so full and Saints so empty ; that they should speak what they have seen with their Father, and we should speak no more

more what we have seen with our Father; that oaths, and lies, and blasphemies, and scoffs, and cursing should be so rife in theirs; and that truth and goodness, and holiness, blessings and praises should be no more in our mouths; that there should be so much guile in theirs, and so little grace in our lips; that the shade should be more fruitful than the Sun; that the good should be only the barren ground, that their habitations should be so full of violence and oppression, and wantonness, and no more mercy, and righteousness, and sobriety in ours.

Wo to us, that we know so much to so little purpose; that we should be Bushels to hide, and not rather candlesticks to hold forth the Candle of the Lord he hath lighted up in us! Oh how many dark souls might our Candle lead on to the Sun! The light that is in *Israel*, might do much to the turning *Egypt* into *Goshen*: speak Christians, speak what you have seen, and testify what you have believed; bring forth out of your treasure, pity the blind world, or at least be more helpful one to another. Instruct as you have been instructed, convince as you have been convinced, comfort as you have been comforted of God. Out-vie sinners, let not their mouths be so full of cursing, as yours of blessing; whilst theirs are so full of blasphemies, let it be said of you as of your Lord, full of grace are their lips. Good words are not wind, you may reckon them not amongst the leaves, but the fruit. Whilst you are speaking of the things of God, you are therein doing the will of God. I confess the Proverb is true, *The greatest talkers are not alwayes the greatest doers*. But 'tis true also, he is seldom a great doer, that hath nothing to say. There is a speaking which is our doing: there is a speaking in a way of *boasting*, to magnifie and set up our selves, beware of that; and there is a speaking to the use of *edifying*, to build up our brethren; when we are thus speaking to
instruct,

instruct, to convince, to awaken, and whet on our own and others spirits to our work, we are then in doing our work. Speak Christians, and speak often the things that you know, only let me add, let your lives speak also, and not only your lips. If you would not be vain-talkers, *be all tongue*, let your lips speak, and your hands speak, and your feet speak, let your works and your ways speak the wonderful things of God. Bring forth what you have received; he that is all *inside*, and he that is all *outside*, are equally nothing. The one is a shadow without substance, the other substance is but a shadow; the one is a deceiver, the other a deceived soul; the one boasts himself, the other thinks himself something, but neither is any thing.

Christians, be full of good fruits, and you will make full proof that your wisdom is from above. *If ye know these things, happy are ye if you do them.*

Weakling Christian, that knowest but little of God, and calling that little nothing; whilest thou doubtest the light hath not shined into thee; dost thou walk in that little light thou hast? dost thou shine as a light in the world? dost thou know how to be holy, and humble, and harmless, and honest? dost thou live under the power of those truths thou knowest? dost thou fear the Lord, and obey the voice of his servants? trust in the Lord, and stay thy self on thy God; thou art a Child of light, though through thy trembling heart, thou walkest in darkness. Having not seen thou lovest, and believing thou shalt rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of Glory.

2. Its favour, 2 Cor. 2. 14. *And maketh manifest the favour of its knowledge by us in every place. The Knowledge of God is sweet-scented, it casts forth a fragrancy where it comes. It bath a gratefulness to the heart, leaves sweet impressions on the senses of the Saints, They taste that the Lord is gracious. As their breathings go up as sweet Incense,*

Incense: so his beams comes down with like sweetness to them. As 'twas said of Christ, so of God, Cant. 1.3. The Name of the Lord is an ointment poured forth. why, what is his Name? Exod. 34.6. This is his Name; The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. O what a bundle of Myrrhe, what a garden of Spices is here enclosed? what a sweet smelling savour doth it send forth to them who have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil?

The Name of the Lord is a precious Ointment, and the Knowledge of God, *is this Ointment poured forth.* Where God is known in the soul, there his sweet savour is shed abroad. The thoughts of God are precious, the ways of God are pleasant to them that understand them. His fruit was sweet unto my taste. O the ineffable pleasures of Religion! the carnal world count it a jejune and insipid thing; they cannot taste, and no wonder, for they do not see the things of God, *nor can they, because they are spiritually discerned.* Let God be savingly known, and then you will find what the savour of his knowledge is. This light is sweet, it is *a pleasant thing to behold the Sun.* O my soul, let thy walks, let thy dwellings be in this Garden of the Lord; let the Sun shine, and the smell of his Spices shall flow forth unto thee. O my Lord, shed abroad thy sweet Ointments, let the smell of thy Garments refresh my soul. Let me taste and see, let me see, and I shall taste that the Lord is gracious.

Vanish all ye carnal pleasures, and sensual delights; these Rose-buds rot, the flowers of your Gardens wither, dead flies are in all your ointments, the light of the Lord hath shined all your glories into darkness. The waters of the Sanctuary have made all your waters brackish, there remains no pleasure in them.

He that hath known the Lord, hath more or less,
according

according to the measure of his knowledge received in the relish and sweetness of it ; and what he hath received in, he sends forth before men ; he hath received, and he is a sweet savour. As the Preachers, so the practitioners of Piety are a *sweet savour of Christ unto God*, and hand down the sweetness of God unto men. They are of savoury lips, and of savoury lives ; the savour of their graces is shed abroad in the Churches of Christ. Carnal hearts send forth a stench instead of a sweet smell ; they are all rottenness, the savour of a sepulchre is all they have ; their ways stink, their words stink, their very breath smells of a rotten heart ; yea, the very best they have, their pleasures stink, their garments, their gallantry, their powders, and perfumes, and sweet odours stink of their proud, and vain, and sensual hearts. But O what a scent do their Ulcers, and their Excrements, their Oaths, and their Curses, and their Scoffs, and their lies send forth ? Sinners, learn to know the Lord, and this will quickly change your savour. And you that know any thing of God, think not that your knowledge is saving, till your souls have received in, and your wayes do send forth the savour of his knowledge.

The last of these, *the savour of this knowledge*, the pleasure that it brings into the soul, though *taken alone*, it is but of uncertain signification ; there may be some pleasure and joy arise from the common knowledge of God ; and sometimes but little taste, where there is the truth of Religion. But *taken in conjunction with the former*, where is found both the *power and the savour*, the evidence of its soundness will be more full. Find all together, this transforming, this fructifying, this savoury knowledge, and you may rest satisfied, that this is the saving knowledge of God. And of this is the promise, *I will give them an heart to know me.*

On ! how much need have we still to wait and beg
for

for the accomplishment of this promise ? how little sound knowledge is there found amongst us ? some are *weak in knowledge*, who have been long taught of God, and yet are not taught of God : God hath been teaching them, but they have not learned of him ; they have had a good Master, but have been ill Scholars ; *weak men*, so we call a man of low understanding, a *weak man*. Oh ! how many weak souls are there, even among professing Christians ? who, though for their time they might have been Teachers of others, had yet need be taught the first Principles of the Oracles of God. *Some men have not the knowledge of God, I speak this to their shame, 1 Cor. 15.*

Others are men of knowledge, but of *weak knowledge* ; who know much, but to little purpose : their great knowledge hath little power in them ; their lusts are too strong for their light, *Isa. 3. 11. I spake unto thee with a strong hand, and instructed thee.* If God have spoken to these men, yet his hand hath not instructed them ; the nail hath not been struck deep enough, it dwells in the head only, it hath not reached their heart, they have an eye, but far enough from having an heart to know the Lord : their knowledge doth not lead them on to Religion, but must serve them instead of Religion ; it is all the Religion they have, to know what it is ; 'tis made to serve, and not suffered to guide and govern ; to serve their turns, to serve their interest, to serve their pride and their covetousness ; their knowledge of God makes them Devils, it helps them to play the hypocrites, to be deceivers of others, yea, and of their own souls : It will seek them out acceptable words, put prayers into their mouths, praises into their lips, spiritualize their language, furnish them with savoury discourses, carry them plausibly through duties, wherein, though God hath the Name, though souls have the Name, yet are they all but sacrifices to their lusts ; the knowledge of God humbleth,

humbleth, but this knowledge puffeth up, and listeth up ; puffeth them up in their own, and listeth them up in others thoughts ; and when it hath done this, it hath done them all the service they have for it to do, unless it may be, they have some worse work for it ; To make rents and divisions in the Church of Christ, to maintain Disputes, to cavel and quarrel, to divide and make parties, to make twenty Religions out of one, till at length they make that one to be none. Whilst the Apostle says, *Some men have not the Knowledge of God, I speak this to your shame ;* I may say also, *Some men have the Knowledge of God, I speak this to your shame. What, the Knowledge of God, and no more humility ? the Knowledge of God, and no more Charity ? I speak this to your shame.* Have the Faith of Christ in respect of persons ! have the Knowledge of God in respect of parties ! Know God, and yet divide and scatter, and confound them that are of God ! yea, and contend and quarrel about such small differences, as sometimes is seen, here is God, and not there ; with us, and not with you ; when it may be a little charity would tell you, for the main, he may be with both ; and so much uncharitableness makes it a question whether with either ? The more such men pretend to the Knowledge of G d, the greater their shame.

Friends, Beware you be not undone, either by your Ignorance, or your knowledge. Love not darkness, and call not *darkness, light* ; call not that the *Knowledge of God* which is not, misuse not that which is ; hast thou no *Knowledge* ? What, and such a Promise before thee ? *I will give them an heart to know me ; they shall all know me.* What, and such a Gospel before thee, the *work* whereof is to open blind eyes, and to turn from *darkness to light* ? open thy mouth sinner, and God will open thine eyes ; *ask, and thou shalt have, seek, and thou shalt find* : See, wink not at the light that shines round about thee ; Love not darkness, if thou love not death ;

This

This is eternal life to know thee. What then is ignorance? there's death in thine heart, if there be no light in thine eye.

Hast thou knowledge? be thankful, and be humble; be not high-minded, but fear; prize it, but do not abuse it. Hast thou received the knowledge of the truth? Live under the power of the truth thou knowest; resign up thy self to it, to its *transforming power*; give it leave to work, and to change thee into its own image. Let this new light make thee a new man, to its *governing Power*; let it teach thee, and rule thee; let it teach as one that hath Authority; let it rule, till it hath put all thine enemies under thy feet; till every thought, imagination, every high thing be made low, and brought into captivity to Christ. Let not the Light of the Lord, help thee to do the devils work; let it not be fodder for thy flesh, lest it be fuel for thy flames; let it not repent thy God nor thee, that ever thou hadst such a Talent committed to thee, let it neither be loss to God, nor the eternal loss of thine own soul: he that hath appeared on earth in beams of light, will be revealed from Heaven in flames of fire, rendring vengeance to all that (*know God*) and obey not the Gospel of Christ. Wo to those that neither know nor obey, but oh! what to those that obey not, though they know?

Christians, know the Lord, but know and fear, know and serve, know and honour thy God; know God, and know thy self; thy sin and thy misery, thy dangers, and thy temptations; know and mourn, know and be ashamed, know and fear, and watch, and fight, and overcome. Know God, and know his will; thy duty and thy way; thy priviledges and opportunities; thy Race and thy Crown. Know, and do, and run, and suffer, and wait, and hope, and rejoyce in hope of the glory of God. Know God, but God in Christ, God re-

ciled; pardoning, absolving, accepting, through him. Know, and believe, accept, adventure upon, resign, commit thy self to him: Know thy God, and behold him; look upon thy God, in his Power, in his Wisdom, in his Holiness, in his Goodness, in his loving kindness, in his mercy. Behold him in his Word, in his Works, in his Providence, in his Saints, in thy soul, in his Son; set him before thine eyes, look upon thy God, and never leave looking, till thou art changed into^t his Image, and satisfied with his Visage; and when thou art brought up to this, then he hath done for thee what he hath said: *I will give them an heart to know me.*

CHAP. XI.

One Heart.

III. **O** *Ne heart, Ezek. 11. 19. I will give them one heart.* We read, *Hof. 14. 11. Ephraim is like a silly Dove, without an heart; hath no heart at all; none for his God, that's as good as none; and Psal. 12. 2. We read that Israel had a double heart, an heart, and an heart, more hearts than one; but sayes the Lord, I will give them an heart, and it shall be but one, and no more.*

The opening of this (to let pass the signification it respects Christians collectively) as it respects a particular Christian: This one heart may be understood as opposed.

To { A wavering
A divided } Heart
A double

1. As opposed to a *wavering*, unstable heart, *Jam. 1. 6, 8.* Wavering minded men have almost as many hearts as they live days, or meet with cases; an heart that

that changes with the weather, and tacks about with every wind, that resolves and repents, that chuses and changes, that like a wave of the Sea is tossed about with every wind: this you may call either many hearts, or no heart, as you will. Thus this one heart is a fixed, established, resolved heart, *Heb. 13. 9. It is good that the heart be (established) with grace.* Grace fixes and establishes the heart, brings it to a consistency in it self, which before was any thing or nothing.

2. As opposed to a divided heart, *Hos. 10. 2.* An heart cut in two as it were. Some talk, that the Devil hath a cloven foot, but whatever the Devils foot be, to be sure, his Sons have a cloven heart, one half for God, the other half for sin; one half for Christ, the other half for this present world; God hath a corner in it, and the rest is for sin and the Devil. Thus this one heart is an entire heart, all the powers of it are united within it self, and go the same way; God hath the whole heart, *Psal. 103. 1. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.* All its springs are in him, and thither do all its streams bend their course.

3. As opposed to a double heart, or an hypocritical heart; properly so called, *Psal. 12. 2, 3.* That's it which is called an heart, and an heart; an heart in the breast, and another in the tongue. Our outside is presum'd to be an expression of our inside, what we speak, we pretend to be our very hearts. 'Tis the very heart in the tongue that speaks, the heart in the eye that weeps, the heart in the hand that works, the heart in the foot that walks; no, 'tis not so with the hypocrite, he shews another heart in his tongue, in his wayes, than that which is within him. He hath an heart, and an heart, one in his tongue or life, and quite another in his breast. His course speaks him another man than he is: And thus one heart signifies a single or a plain heart.

To sum up all together; this one heart is such as

1. Pitches on one end.
2. Has but one thing to do.
3. Does what it does.

1. *Pitches on one end.* God is its end. There it wholly bestows it self: I am thine, *Psal.* 119. And there only it takes up its rest, *Psal.* 39.7. *And now Lord what wait I for? my hope is in thee.* God is both its work & its wages. To please God, this is its whole business; and to enjoy God, this is its happiness. This is the mark it hath in its eye, this is the scope of all its motions, to honour and enjoy God. This it wills, this it loves, this it desires, designs, hopes, labours for, that the Lord may possess, and be the possession of it. Particularly, it gives God,

The place } of the end.
The power }

1. *The place of the end.* God is its first and last. He's first in the eye, and it looks no farther. It makes him not only the chief, but in a sence its only aim. It will have no other God, and therefore no other end, but the Lord. It makes all things else, not only to stoop and stand by, but to serve to him. *Get you hence, stand off,* is its language to all that stands up in his room, or stands in his way. Evil men, whatever honour they pretend to have of the Lord, they do but make him a servant to their other Gods. Religion they will take up, but it is only to serve their own turns, to bring about their carnal ends; *They serve not the Lord, but their own bellies,* saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 16.18. *Phil.* 3.19. Nay, they make the Lord their fellow-servant; they serve, and their Religion must serve their sensual appetites. He that will have so much Religion only, as he may live upon (which is the measure of the most) makes the Lord no longer his God, but his servant. A sincere Christian will set God upon the Throne, and makes all things else his servants

vants or his footstool. Whatever will not be serviceable, must be trodden in the dirt. Nothing will be loved and imbraced, but what will set God higher, or bring God nearer to his heart.

2. The power of the end ; the end hath a four-fold power :

It { draws.
directs.
governs.
rewards.

1. It draws the heart to it ; God who is a Christians end is also his beginning. Our first step heaven-ward, we owe to the influence of heaven upon us. *Draw me, we will run after thee*, Cant. 1. *No man can come unto me, unless the Father which hath sent me, draw him*. Nothing but God will do it, ss nothing will draw the soul another way ; the pleasures of sin, the wages of unrighteousness, are poor and low baits to entice a soul away from God ; that is, so far as 'tis renewed ; so it is nothing but God that draws the soul on its way, and he will do it. God draws the soul not by an act of power only, but by moral swasion, that is the proper casualty of the end. Not by *efficiency* only, but by *sympathy* ; as by the water, the thirsty soul is drawn to the water-brooks.

It is God that draws hearts after him ; there are instruments, as his Word and Ministers ; and there are arguments by which God draws, but whatever the instruments or arguments are, it is God that does it. What is the work of either Word or Ministers, but to set God before them ? and this draws. Instruments can do nothing, unless God be the Preacher by them ; arguments can do nothing, unless he be the *medium* of them ; as it was said concerning the peoples following *Saul*, so much more concerning those that follow the Lord.

Those only follow him, whose hearts God hath touched. It is not man touching, but Gods touching the heart, that draws it heaven-ward. The tongue of man may touch the ear, it is God only that touches the heart. And when he touches, then the heart will follow. As you know the Needle, when it is touched with a Loadstone, then it turns after it. The Loadstone is not more natural attractive of the Needle, than God is of that heart which he hath touched. Cant. 5. 4. *My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved in me.* He did but touch the door, and her heart felt him, and moved towards him.

O Christians, when you have been waiting upon God in Prayer, Hearing or any other spiritual duty, or Ordinance; consider, hath mine heart been touched this day? My tongue hath been touched, mine ear hath been touched, mine heart hath been treated with, but hath the Lord touched it? hath there vertue come forth from him, which hath enticed and drawn my soul after him? Sometimes by a message, or visit from Heaven, the Lord hath drawn a good word from the lip, a tear from the eye; but O for touches upon souls, for turning of bowels, for the flowings out of hearts after the Lord; he is the only Loadstone that prevails on gracious souls.

Others that have many hearts, have many attractives; every heart hath its peculiar God, twenty Gods it may be in one man, because so many hearts. Their pleasures are their Gods, their profits their Gods, their belly their Gods; their wives, or their children, their Gods, and so many Gods, so many ends. And every end is a Loadstone to draw them after them. Every heart will after its God. A Christian that hath but one heart, hath but one God, and this is he that draws it on its way. Thou sayst, *The Lord is the God, thou acknowledgest, thou ownest, thou hast chosen him for thine*; but what doth thy
God

God whom thou hast chosen do upon thine heart? what will the sight of God, or thy love to God, or thy hope in God, do upon thee? how far will it carry thee? which way runs thy heart? which way dost bend thy course? dost feel thy God drawing thee? and is thy heart running after him? running, notes motion.

I shall lay before you these six or seven expressions, the Scripture uses, to note the running of those hearts after God, whom he hath drawn.

1. The *desiring* of the soul after God. Isa. 26. 8, 9. *The desire of our soul is to thy Name. - With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me, will I seek thee early.* Desire is the soul in motion Godwards. Towards him are their desires, and they come deep, *ab intimis, ab imo pectore*, from their inwards, from the bottom of the heart. *With my soul have I desired thee, with my spirit within me will I seek thee*, Psal. 58. 9. *Lord, all my desire is before thee:* 'Tis not all my desires, but my desire; thou see'st all, and 'tis all but one desire. He desires pardon, he desires peace, he desires help, and the healing of his wounds; but all this is but one desire. God is all. *One thing have I desired*, Psal. 27. 4.

2. The *thirsting* of the soul. Psal. 42. 2. *My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. Thirsting* is the extremity of desire; hunger and thirst are the appetite of desire heightened; violent and painful appetites; *My soul thirsteth, and is in pain till it be satisfied.*

3. The *longing* of the soul. Psal. 63. 1. *O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee: my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.* Longing causeth languishing, and abortions, if it be not satisfied; Psal. 119. 20. *My soul breaketh for the longing desire it hath to thy judgments. My heart panteth, my flesh faileth, the light of mine eyes is gone from me*, Psal. 38. 10.

4. *Calling after God, Psal. 4. 1. Hear me [when I call] O God of my righteousness.* Calling upon God, is the voice of desires. The desiring soul will not keep silence, the tongue, the eyes, the ears, the hands, the knees, must all be Oratoirs, when the flame is once kindled within.

5. *Crying after the Lord.* This is an expression answering the *thirsting of the soul*. Crying is a passionate, and importunate praying. *I cried unto the Lord with my whole heart, Psal. 119. 145.*

6. *Crying out after God.* This is the manner of the longing soul. Crying out, notes more than bare crying; loud cries, strong cries forced out by a Paroxysme of love, or an agony the soul is in. *Psal. 84. 2. My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh [crieth out] for the Living Lord.*

7. *Following hard after the Lord, Psal. 63. 8. My soul followeth hard after thee.* This expression is more comprehensive, it notes, both all the workings, and breakings, and breathings of the soul within, and its diligent pursuing in the use of all outward means, and pressing on after the Lord. All those labourings, and watchings, and runnings; all the holy violence, wherewith a Saint presses into the Kingdom of God.

Put all this together, and you will see the power and influence the Lord hath on holy souls, to the drawing of them after him; they are in motion Heaven-ward, desiring, thirsting, longing, calling, crying, crying out, following hard after him. What aileth these souls; what is the matter with them? what would they have? *Judg. 19. 23. What aileth thee, said the Danites once to Micah, that thou comest thus after us? what aileth thee? Why, you have taken away my gods, and what have I more? What aileth these crying, longing, running souls? Why, it is after their God they cry, it is after their God they run. 1 King. 19. 20. Go back Eli-*
sha,

sha, said once the Prophet to him, when he had cast his Mantle on him ; *Go back, for what have I done unto thee ; What hast thou done ? enough to hold me from going Back : there went vertue with the Mantle ; the Mantle fell on his heart, as well as his back, and drew it after the Prophet. Should you say thus to these, Go back Soul, go back from following thy God, for what hath he done unto thee ? Oh he hath gotten mine heart ; No, no ; I cannot go back, he is my God, and what have I more.*

2. The end guides and directs to means : *Whither shall I go from thee ? thou hast the words of eternal life.*

3. The end governs ; I shall put these both together. What is it that governs sinners but their ends ? this points them out their work, & their way : this holds them to their work, and keeps them in their way : whatever fetters and chains their lusts are to them, 'tis their carnal ends to which they are in bondage ; these are they that Lord it over them, and hereupon it is impossible to perswade a sinner to make a through change of his way, till he hath changed his ends : herein stands the conversion of a sinner, in the changing of his ends ; when he ceases to be any longer to himself, to his flesh, to the world, and for a worldly happiness, and is brought about to pitch on God as his portion and happiness, to whom he devotes and dedicates himself ; there is conversion. Sin is our turning away, and conversion is turning back to our God. Beloved, consider not barely *how*, but to *what* you live ; not only what you *do*, but what you *would have*, and never count yourselves truly godly, whatever of God be in your way, till God be in your heart and eye ; he that hath first chosen God, and therefore a godly life, whose godliness of life, springs forth as the fruit of the choice of the Lord : that is a godly man.

God governs, as our King, and as our *End* ; as our King by his Sovereignty, as our End by his *Excellency* ;
by

by his worthiness and goodness, as our King by *Laws* as our end by Love. Love will find out our way, will tell all our wanderings, will check us for our sins, sweeten our labours, quicken us on our course, cut out our way through dangers and difficulties, and keep us in our way, till we come to the fruition of our end. Therefore it is said by the Apostle, *1 Tim. 1. 9. The Law is not for a righteous man.* Love will save the Law a labour; *the Law is not for a righteous man,* not so much at least as for sinners; not as to the Coertion of it, though still as to its Obligation: the constraint of *Love* will much superfeed the Coertion of *Laws*.

4. The end, *Rewards, they have their reward, Mat. 6.* that is they have their end, *the reputation for devout and charitable men,* was the end of *their Devotion and Charity.* They *prayed, and fasted, and gave alms,* for no other end, and the obtaining that *reputation,* was their reward. *Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.*

God is the reward of his Saints; *Gen. 15. 1. I am thy exceeding great reward,* *Isa. 46. 4. My judgment is with the Lord, and my reward with my God.* God is the reward they (*shall*) receive, and the reward they look to receive, *Heb. 11. 29. Moses had (respect) to the recompence of reward.*

And therefore the Argument is weighty, which Christ used to dissuade his Disciples from being in *their devotions, in their Alms-deeds, as the Pharisees and Hypocrites are,* who *disfigured their countenance in their fasts,* who *sounded a Trumpet to proclaim their Alms;* *Be ye not like them, for they have their reward.* The Argument was strong to the Disciples, who being men of *another spirit,* could not be satisfied with such a reward.

In these two things Saints greatly differ from the men of this world:

1. *They are not willing to defer their duties till hereafter*
And

2. *They*

2. *They dread it to have their reward here, they would dispatch their work, and are willing to go upon trust for their wages.* Sinners would have their wages in hand, and be trusted for their work till hereafter ; they would be happy here, and can be content to stay for holiness till hereafter ; it is soon enough to be Saints in Heaven. But oh ! it would be a dreadful word to Saints., *There are thy good things, take them, these are thy reward.* These are not their end, and therefore they cannot take them for their reward.

Poor foolish worldings, how are you dis-joynted ? how are your weary hearts scattered through the ends of the earth ? how many Masters do you serve ? how many matters have you to mind ? you weary your selves in the greatness of your way, and what is your reward ? what the fields can give, you have ; what your sheep or your oxen can give, you have ; what your beds, or your tables, or your houses, or your cloaths can give, you have ; *here a little, and there a little*, you get up, your beds give you ease, your houses shelter, your sports and companions pleasure, your parasites honour, and that little you can pick up here and there, this is your reward. Verily I say unto you, you have your reward ; unhappy souls, you are troubled and careful about many things, for nothing ; *one thing is needful* ; and if yet ye will be wise, chuse that good part, which shall not be taken from you.

2. *This one heart, hath but one thing to do, Philip. 3. 13. This one thing I do.* There are all things in that one thing ; all things needful. How many things soever his hand findeth to do, all is but one. He intends in all, God. A renewed heart designs God, and is making Godwards in all he does. Whatever journey he goes, 'tis God is his home ; whatever race he runs, 'tis God is his mark, and prize. Whatever battle he fights against flesh, and blood, against Principalities and Powers, 'tis that he

he may cut his way through all to his God. Whatever he does, he does it for God ; whatever he suffers, he suffers for God. When he hears, or fasts, or prays, 'tis all for God. *When ye fasted, did ye at all fast to me?* Yes to thee, a Christian is able to say ; he hath many things to pray for, and fast for ; he hath bread, and cloathes, and friends ; and health, and safety, and liberty, to pray for ; but in all, he prays for God : he entitles God to all he hath, and marks it up for him, and he sees and enjoys God in all he has ; he will not own that for a mercy, that hath not God in it, and is not a foot or a wing to carry him on towards him. And therefore whatever he begs to himself, 'tis that he may have it for God. What he gives he gives to God ; whom he forgives, 'tis for the Lords sake ; whether he eats, or drinks, or works, or buyes, or sells, or whatever else he does, he does it all to the glory of God, *1 Cor. 10. 31.* For him he prays, for him he waits, for him he labours, for him he suffers, for me he lives, to me he dies. *To me to live is Christ, Phil. 1. 21.* according to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as alwayes, so now also, Christ may be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death. This is the one thing he intends, this is the one thing he seeks in all, take his whole course together ; he can say with the Apostle, *This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

3. *He does what he does ;* And that

1. Not feignedly, but really.

2. Not faintly, but heartily.

1. *Really.* He pursues this end, in a plain and honest way: *He that hath this one heart, hath but one way. Heart and life go hand in hand ; he makes strait steps to his heart, and his*

his heart makes strait steps to his feet; he doth *ὁρθοδοξείν*, and he doth also *ὁρθοποδεῖν*. As he looks strait on, so he walks strait on to his mark. He doth not look one way, and row another. He is a Jacob, a plain man, a plain-dealing man; a Nathanael, in whom is no guile: He turns his inside outward; his life is not a Cloak, but a Commentary on his heart; The Expositors of his inward man. His end is in his heart, and his heart is in his face, in his tongue, in his duties, and all his ways. He is no Polititian, 2 Cor. 1. 12. Not in fleshly wisdom; his Religion is not a blind, or a device to delude the simple, he is down-right, and in earnest in all he does. He does the same thing he seems to do, his praying is praying indeed; his fasting, and alms, are such indeed; his very profession is practise; he would not believe, nor make others believe, but that he is what he is. He seeks not commendation from men, but approbation with God. His design is not inordinately to commend himself to the good Opinion, though he would be made manifest in the consciences of others. He would not be a Lye or a Cheat. He abhors all lying, but most of all a religious lye. He would not lye for God, much less against him; such a lye is as blasphemy to him. He loves not Images; he would have a soul in all his practises. A prayer without, a sacrifice without an heart, a Religious Carcass is an abomination to him. He would not make such a noble medium as Religion, to serve so base an end as the serving of the flesh.

He hath other work to do than to serve times or tables; then to please himself or men, than to serve wills, or humours, or lusts; he hath a soul, a conscience, a God to look after; he hath but one business to do, but one Master to serve; if he be a Magistrate, he rules for God; if he be a Minister, he preaches for God; if he be a Parent, he educates for God; if he be a Master, he governs for God; to him he dedicates himself and his House; he writes on his doors, this is Bethel, this

is none other but the house of God, If he be a *Child*, or a *Servant*, he obeys in the Lord, and for the Lord; he knows he hath to do with God in all he does; when he is dealing with men, with his friends, with his family, in his calling, in his recreations, in all he hath to do with God; and he can take comfort in nothing but what God will take pleasure in. *Thou hast no pleasure in iniquity. Thou lovest truth in the inward parts.* And there is no truth in the inward parts, but when there is truth also in the outward parts, when the heart, and tongue, and wayes agree. 'Tis in vain to say, *Mine heart is good*, when the wayes are naughty. A false tongue, deceitful wayes, will give the lye to the heart. He cannot subsist longer than he hath smiles from Heaven. Communion with God is his life, his all is in God. His heart dies, when the fountain is stopped. If he cannot have cleareness, & boldness in the presence of God, he can no longer look himself in the face, but blushes and hangs down his head with shame. He values not either the applause or the scorn of men: so he may have a witness of his acceptance with God. O Lord, dost thou regard? wilt thou accept of me? It is enough. Let all the world call me, *Thou Fool, Thou Pharisee, Thou Hypocrite*, so the Lord will say, *My Child*, it is well. It is folly spoken, it is foolishly, it is weakly done; it is pride, it is singularity, it is scrupulosity: thus the world cry: Let them alone, O my soul, I will hearken what the Lord God will say; if he sayes, *Thou hast been faithful*; I will hearken what Conscience will say, if it sayes *well done*; let all else say what they please; this is my rejoycing, mine only rejoycing, the testimony of my Conscience, that in all simplicity and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, I had my conversation in the world.

2. Heartily. Whatever he does for God, he does it with a good will. He hath cast up all business into one, and is intent upon it. He worketh righteousness, as sinners work
 wicked.

wickedness, with both hands, earnest, Micah 7. 3. *He is religious in good earnest, he prays in good earnest, he hears in good earnest, he runs in good earnest: the powers of his soul being all united in one channel, run more strongly, his many springs falling all into one stream, make a river, that bears down all bays before it.* The Psalmist prays, Psal. 86.

11. *Unite mine heart to fear thy Name. Unite mine heart to thee, and unite mine heart in it self, that it may all run towards thee. Unite my heart to fear, and so unite my heart to love thy Name. Unite mine heart to serve, and follow, and live to thee.* As if he should have said, O my God, mine heart is divided, and discomposed, scattered up and down, I know not where; my pleasures have a part, my estate hath a part, my friends have a part, my family hath a part, there's little or none left for God: I have too many things to fear, too many things to love, and care for, too many things to serve and follow, to follow the Lord with any strength or intention of mind. Call in all, Lord all my parts, all my powers, command their joynt and united attendance upon thee.

1 Pet. I. 13, 14, 15. *Gird up the loyns of your mind, and be sober, and hope to the end* (in the original, *'tis hope perfectly*) *for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient Children, not fashioning your selves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation. Gird up the loyns of your minds.*

Gird and be sober, gird and hope perfectly, gird and be obedient, gird and be holy. Here it is true, Ungirt and unblest, ungirt and unholy; the girding is the gathering in the strength of the heart to its work. Ephes.

6. 14. *Stand with your loyns girt.* Stand, do not gird and ungird, stand always girt; call in your hearts, and hold them in; be always in a readiness to every duty, in a readiness against every Temptation. Oh how loose are we

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we? what loose praying, and loose hearing, and loose meditation, and loose walkings, do we satisfie our selves with? our hearts are to seek, our thoughts and affections are gadding abroad, we know not where to find them, and our work is done thereafter. We excuse our non-proficiency in Religion, by our many hindrances, by the difficulties our work; but the great hindrance lies here, our loyns are ungirded, our hearts are not united in our work, nor intent upon it. When God and the *things of eternity* are gotten so deep into the heart, when there is such a deep sense of the weight and importance of the things that are eternal, abiding upon us, as overpowers carnal objects and loosens the heart from them; when we feel the evidence, and the consequence of these things commanding our whole souls after them, then there's Religion in earnest; then we go on, and prosper. And thus 'tis with this one heart, there are not some light touches only upon it; God is gotten deep into it, eternity is gotten deep into it, this is all; this is all I have to mind, or do. My hope, my comforts, my life, my soul, all hang upon this one thing; if I speed well here, I am made for ever. *What have I to do in the way of Egypt, or to drink of the water of Sihor? what have I to do in the way of Assyria?* what have I to do in the way of pleasure? what have I to do in the way of the world; To build Tabernacles for my self here below, or to drink the waters of mine own Cistern? How little am I concerned in the interest of this flesh? What matters it, what becomes of it, or which way it goes? My God, my God, my soul, my soul, there lies my concernments; of these let my care only be. Get thee behind me Satan, hold thy peace sinful flesh, keep silence worldly cares; hinder me not, speak no more to me of hearkening to you, away from me ye evil doers. I will keep the Commandments of my God; Let others do what they will,

will, run whither they please, chuse whom they will serve, what they will follow after; come my soul follow thou the Lord, gird up thy loyns and come away; for the other world, for the other world; make haste, linger not; let others loiter as they will, escape for thy life, look not behind thee, get thee up to the Mountain and live.

Object. *One heart, why 'tis never more two; two men, a new man, and an old, two Nations, two selfs, there are twins in the womb of every Saint; the ungodly seem more one than they, all for sin, and for Hell; all dark, all hard, all but one stone.*

Sol. Yet 'tis true, the Saints, and they only have but this one heart; For,

1. The old heart is not an heart, the old self is not the self; this old man is not the man, this is not he, that's the heart that hath gotten the dominion, and the rule in the man. The new heart hath the dominion; though sin as *Esau*, be the first born, yet the elder must now serve the younger; the old man is but a dead man, *Col. 3. 3. Ye are Dead*, that is, your old man is Dead, your sin is slain, and Crucified with Christ, and when 'tis dead, you may say *'tis not*.

2. The meaning plainly is, I will give them the heart; that is, a single, sincere, upright heart; they shall be no longer an Hypocritical people. If there be something of Hypocrisie in them, yet Hypocrites they shall no longer be; their hearts shall be upright before me; sincerity stands in pitching upon, chusing, and giving up our hearts to God, as our *chief good, and last end*. When God is our *all*, there is *perfection*, and when God is our *chief*, there is sincerity. I say, when God is our *all*, when the world hath nothing left in us, to entice or draw out our souls after it, but God carries them wholly without any the least liking, or lusting after sinful objects,

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there's perfection ; This is not attainable here ; the heart cannot be thus perfectly one, till corruption hath put on incorruption ; But though it be not *perfectly* ; yet it may be *sincerely* one ; and then 'tis so, when however, the flesh hath too great an interest in it, and influence upon it, and often pulls it aside, and puts it back ; yet it still bends its course Heaven-wards, and that way the stream, and strength of the Soul is running, the flesh will be putting in for a part ; it would have all, it would not take its turns with God ; God will not take his turns with the flesh, he will have all or none ; and the flesh would not take its turns with him ; it is not contented with *now and then*, it would not be served in the Fields, or in the Shop, or at the Table, or in the Bed only, but in the Church, in the Chamber, in the Closet, 'twould carry away all from God, but if it cannot have all, 'twill divide with God ; whereever God is served, the flesh will be putting in for its share. The best of Christians feel too great a truth in this ; their frequent humblings, and Mournings, and Breakings, and self-shamings before the Lord, are mostly upon this account ; This is the voice of their deepest groanings, and bitterest tears ; the burdens of their mournful groans, *I cannot do the things that I would ; when I would do good, evil is present with me : with my mind I serve the Law of God, but with my flesh the Law of sin ;* Woe is me, my Soul, how am I straitned ? how am I divided ? Whither am I hurried ? wherewithal do I come before the Lord ? Oh ! what halting, and heartless, and distracted Duties, do I serve my God withal ? This flesh eats up the fat, and the best ; and only the lame, and the lean, and the sick, are left for a Sacrifice to the Lord. *Wo is me, my leanness, my leanness ; my God, my God, how art thou served ? how art thou robbed of thy due ? these strangers are gotten into thy Sanctuary, and eat up all thy pleasant things, and what have they left thee ?*

Such

Such are their complaints, and their very complaints are their comfort, and the witness of their sincerity, whilst they can with openness of heart make their approach and appeal to God : yet thou art my Lord, thou art my God, and I will serve thee. I have chosen thee as mine heritage for ever, and I will wait for thy salvation. Hear the sighing of thy prisoner, deliver thy captive : mine heart is with thee, let not this flesh intrench upon thy right, let sin no longer reign in my mortal body ; let me have no more to do with the throne of iniquity, untie the cords, loose the fetters, bring my soul out of prison, search me, O Lord, and know mine heart, prove me, and know my thoughts. *Is there any way of wickedness in me ? Do I willingly go after the Commandments ? Do I regard iniquity in mine heart ?* Here it lies, it is true, it wars, and raises tumults, and insurrections against thee ; but do I resign up my self to it ? is it a pleasure to me ? am I at peace with it ? O Lord, thou knowest, I cannot get rid of it, I cannot do the thing that I would, I cannot pray as I would, nor hear as I would, nor think, nor speak, nor live as I would : whither I go, sin goes with me ; where I lodge, it lodges ; if I sit still, it abides with me ; if I run from it, it follows me ; I can neither rest, nor work, I can do nothing for it. I can do nothing for it ; and yet blessed be thy Name, this one thing I do ; what I cannot attain, I follow after ; I cannot conquer, yet I fight against it ; I wrestle with it, though it so often give me the fall. I trust it not, though it flatter me ; I love it not though it feed me ; I prostitute not my self unto it, though it commits so many a rape upon me : my heart is with thee, Lord, my foot is making after thee ; I groan, I travel in pain, waiting for thy redemption ; till I dye, I will not give over. I will dye fighting, I will dye hoping. I will dye praying, *Save me, O Lord, make no long tarrying, O my God.*

And thus you have the description of this one heart. It pitches on one end, and God is that end. It gives him the place of the end, he is its first and last. It gives him the power of the end : this one thing, the obtaining of God to be theirs, draws them on, guides, governs them, in their whole course, and is accepted by them as their only and exceeding great reward. This instructs them, this rules, and encourages them, calls them off from sin, calls them on to duty, carries them out in suffering ; all their powers are united in this one business ; all their arguments are resolved into this one argument, all their rewards are summed up in this one reward, *God shall be glorified, and therein my soul shall be satisfied ; God shall be mine, and glory shall be his.*

In all this we see what this one heart means, but *Oh how little of this grace have we received !* how many hearts have we ? how many Gods have we, to divide these hearts betwixt them ? how small a corner ?

How low a place must the Lord take up with us if he will have any at all ? how often is he made to stand aside, or to stoop to a Lust, God made to give place to the Devil ? Is God our all indeed ? have we none else to please, have we none else to serve ? have we no portion, no inheritance, no other God but the Lord ? Is he our Alpha and Omega, our first and our last, our Spring and our Ocean, our Summe and our scope, the rise and the rest of all our motions ? Whatever our tongues speak, do our hearts also, and our lives say, To me to live is Christ ? None but God, none but Christ, nothing but Heaven and Glory ? When we are driving so hard for our flesh, for our pride, for our ease, for our gain, when we are so busie this way, and so hearty and so zealous this way : when these must have so great a share in our Religion, is this still the voice, To me to live is Christ ? Oh how little power hath the Lord with us ? how far is it that the single interest of God will carry our souls ? how little

is done purely for God ? we have often many strings to our bow : there are some services, wherein there is something coming to the flesh, as well as to the Name of God ; Some credit or honour, some outward advantage to be gotten by Religion ; but when all the other strings crack, but this one ; when there is nothing to move us but God, Oh how weak do our motions grow ? The flesh often goes partner with God : there is a double trade driving in the same actions ; a trade for Heaven, and a trade for Earth together ; there is something to be gotten by our Religion, besides what is coming to God ; there are Fields, and Vineyards, and Oliveyards, Friends, and Honors, and Preferments : as it sometimes falls out, when godliness is in the rising side, and when it is thus we go smoothly and vigorously on. *Come see the zeal that I have for the Lord of Hosts.* But when the interest of God, and the Flesh divide, and part asunder ; when the Flesh is like to be a loser by our Religion ; when God puts us on such a duty, as will spend upon the Flesh, and eat out, and devour its Interest ; when our hearts tell us as *Deborah* did *Barak*, Judges 4. *This will not be for thine honour, or this will not be for thine ease, or thy safety ;* then what becomes of our zeal ? Oh how heavily do we then drive on ? how seldome is it, that this word, (*Yet God shall be glorified*) will ballance all the prejudices, and confute all the cross reasonings of the flesh, and carry us on our way, without and against it ?

How little hath the Lord of the *Government* of us ? If he doth govern as a *King*, yet how little as *our End* ? How little doth goodness govern ? how little will love do with us ? we must have Rigour and Severity ; we must have spurs, and Goads, and Rods, and stripes, and Scorpions too, and all little enough, to drive us back from those other Gods which we have chosen, & to bring us on after the Lord. If the Law be not made for the

righteous, if they need not a Law, then what are we, whom a Law will not suffice? If commands, threatenings, terrours, penalties, judgments, can do no more upon us; If we are yet so loose, and so carnal, and so earthly, and so froward, and so false, and so formal, under severest discipline; if we will not be whipped into more humility, spirituality, self-denial, watchfulness, care, activity, zeal; but are such drones, and such Sleepers, such Earth-worms, and such Sensualists still, under all the corrections and compulsions of the Law; Oh what should we be, did we want a Law? were there nothing but love to restrain us from sin, and constrain and quicken us to duty?

Christians, *have we but one thing to do*, in all we do? sometimes we are busie in *doing nothing*. Though there be a prayer in our mouths, the praises of God in our mouths, Christ, Heaven, Holiness, Glory, a new heart, a new life upon our tongues, there's nothing within; no prayer, no praise, no Christ, nor Heaven; what have we been often doing in the Closet, in the Family, in the Congregation, when we seemed to have been praying? Nothing, nothing, but sowing wind and good words. Sometimes we have too many things in our hearts; what a world of carnal devices, and fleshly projects have we wrapt up in the garment of our Religion? *Peters sheet* had not a more heterogeneous miscellany of creatures: *four-footed beasts, wild beasts, creeping things, and fowls of the air*, than our Religious duties have of designs and ends. We have men to please, our pride, our bellies, to offer sacrifice to; we bring our Farms, and our Oxen, and our Trades before the Lord: are not our hearts, which should be the *houses of prayer, the houses of merchandize*? are we not *talking, or pursuing, or in a journey, or a sleep*, or driving bargains? O Christians, if we were privy to one anothers hearts, as God is privy to

to them, what abominations should we see brought into the holy places ? What monsters would our most sacred services appear ? Which whilst the outside is only viewed, are applauded and admired. Is this our singleness of heart ? Oh ! for shame, and blushing, and confusion of face : Oh ! for a *Vail* to hide such hearts from the jealous eyes of the holy God : a *varnish*, a fair cut-side, hides all from men ; but nothing but a dark Vail of shame, and sorrow, and tears, and repentance, a *Vail dyed in Blood*, in the blood of Christ, will hide them from the eyes of the Lord.

Oh how little plainness and singleness of heart is there, *in our ordinary course*, in our dealings and conversings in the World ? How little Faith, or Truth, is there in us ? How little trust is there to us ? What doubling, what deceitful dealing, defrauding, over-reaching, undermining, are we guilty of ? how false are we in our promises ? how insignificant are our words ? what an uncertain sound do they give ; Our *Yea* may often stand for *Nay*, and our *Nay* for *Yea*, *Psalm 12. 2. They speak vanity every one with his neighbour, with flattering lips and a double heart do they speak : trust ye not in a friend, put not confidence in a guide.*

Blessed be God, the Lord hath a Generation on whom this cannot be charged, *Children that will not lye*, nor deceive : though Satan and this evil world bind up all in a bundle, they are all naught, they are all false, vain-boasters, and deceitful workers, there is none upright, no not one ; but thanks be to God, Satan is a lyar, the accuser of the Brethren, is a *false accuser*. God hath his children that will not lye. But wo be to those professors, by reason of whom the offence cometh.

Christians, hath God promised to give you one heart ? Let it be once said, *This day is this Scripture fulfilled ;* O may you be the accomplishment of this good word ! Hath

God promised to give you one heart? Do not you say, *but I will not take it*; two are better than one: I have found so much the sweet of deceit, that there is no life like it; Hath God said, I will give one heart? let not any one among you say, *but I fear he will not*. Make not the promise of God of none effect, either by your impiety or unbelief: Doth God promise to give this one heart? he that promised it, doth also require it. Be thy self Christian: Let it be said thou art what thou art, be true, be but one; have but one heart, and let thy one heart have but one tongue, but one face, and but one thing to do. Beware of Hypocrisie, beware of carnal policy; make not thy God to serve thy flesh; call not the serving of thy Flesh, a serving of God, and make not thy serving of God to be a serving of the Flesh, be not divided betwixt God and the World: O how easie would our lives be, did we find our whole souls running one way? taking up with God as the adequate object of all our Powers? the mark of all our motions, and the reward of all our labours? did all our streams empty themselves into this Ocean, and all our lines meet in this one centre? Did God only draw and allure our hearts, and the sincerity of our hearts give motion to all our wheels? Guide our eyes, govern our tongues, order our steps, animate our duties, direct and quicken us in all our goings? Oh how sweet, oh how beautiful, were such a life? the Sympathy betwixt our hearts and end, there is *sweetness*; the Harmony of our hearts and ways, there is *beauty*. O how sweet are the drawings of love, the free and full closure of our Spirits with God, dissolving themselves into his Will, acquiescing, resting satisfied in his goodness, is a sweetness which no man knows, but he that tastes it; the harmony of the power of the Soul within it self, of its motions and actions in the life, there is the beauty, which will eclipse the glory of the world,

world. Christian, be it thus with thee, and thou hast the blessing; the covenant blessing, which the Lord hath promised, in saying, *I will give them one heart.*

CHAP. XII.

An Heart of Flesh.

III. **A**N Heart of *Flesh*, Eze. 36. 26. *I will take away the stony heart out of your Flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.* The old heart is a stone, cold as a stone, dead as a stone, hard as a stone; but I will take away the stone, and give an heart of flesh.

An heart of flesh, is a *soft and tender heart*; *Flesh* can feel any thing that is contrary to it, puts it to pain; Sin makes it smart; it cannot kick, but it is against the pricks, by its rebellion and resistance against the Lord, it receives a wound; it cannot hit, but it hurts it self. A soft hand gets nothing by laying on, on a hedge of Thorns. A soft heart when it hath been meddling with sin, is sure to smart for it. It can neither escape the pain, nor yet indure it: and what it cannot bear, 'twill take warning to avoid it.

Flesh will Bleed. A soft heart will mourn, and melt, and grieve, when hard hearts are moved at nothing. *Flesh will yield.* It's apt to receive impressions. The power of God will awe it; his justice fear it; his mercy melt it; his holiness humble it, and leave the stamp and image of it upon it. And as the Attributes, so the Word and Works of God, will make sign upon it. Who sets a seal upon a stone? or what print will it receive? upon the wax, the print will abide. *God speaks once and twice*, but man, hardned man, will not regard it. Neither his Word, nor his Rod, neither his speaking, nor his smiting

smiting will make any sign on such hearts. 'Tis the heart of Flesh that hears and yields. And with such hearts the Lord delights to be dealing, *Acts 28.* *The heart of his people is waxed gross*; they will not hear, they will not understand; and the next Word is, *away to the Gentiles*, they will hear. He will no more write his Law on *Tables of Stone*: he'll write in *Flesh*; there the impression will take, & go the deeper: & therefore, wherever he intends to write, he prepares his Table: makes this Stone Flesh, and then engraves upon it. Particularly this tenderness admits of a double distinction.

1. Respecting the object of it: so there is a tenderness.

- { 1. Of Sin.
 { 2. Of Duty.
 { 3. Of Suffering.

1. Of Sin; and that's two-fold, such as discovers it self,

Ante factum.

Post factum.

1. *Ante factum.* Or before the commission. Whilest it is under a temptation, or feels the first motion to sin. A tender heart startles, starts back at the sight of a sin, as at the sight of a Devil, *Gen. 39.9.* *How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?* the manner of the speech, presents *Joseph* as a man in a fright, startled at the ugliness of the motion. So *David*, when he had an opportunity, and a temptation to slay *Saul*, *1 Sam. 26. 11.* rejects it with an *abst.* God for-bid. *The Lord for-bid that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lords Anointed.* And that not only at the higher and greater, but it resists the little ones, the smallest of sins. Is it not a little one? is no plea with it. Little or great, 'tis a sin, and that's enough.

2. *Post factum.* After the commission; if it hath been brought

brought on upon sin, yet it cannot go out with it. The skirt of *Saul's* garment, was too heavy for *David's* heart to bear. His heart smote him presently, 1 *Sam.* 24. 5. Sin in the review, looks dreadfully. Its pleasant flowers quickly turns to Thorns; it pricks the heart how much soever it pleas'd the eye. It ordinarily enters by the eye; and often runs out the same way it came in, runs out in tears. *When he thought thereon, he wept.* At least, it warns, and makes more watchful after. Thou seest what it is, take heed; take it for a warning, and do no more. The pain of sin, if it do not force a Tear, it will set a watch.

2. *Of Duty.* A tender heart will neither slight a sin, nor neglect a Duty. It is loth to grieve and offend, and careful to serve and please the Lord. It would not that he should suffer by it, nor so much as loose his due. It watches against sin, and unto duty. It cares how to please the Lord, and its care is tender. It would not displease by its neglects or performances; all must be done that ought, and as it ought to be done, It will neither stand out with its offering, nor will it offer an unclean thing. It considers not only what, but how. Both matter and manner, substance and circumstance, all must be right, or it is not at ease. It will keep time, and as much as may be, keep touch with the Lord in every point. It is not satisfied that it prays sometimes, it would not lose a praying time. God will not, and it cannot lose a duty. It would neither lose by non-performance, nor lose what is performed. It would neither leave undone, nor do amiss; any failing, not only in the Matter, but in the Principle, End, Affection, Intention; any failing pains.

3. *In point of Suffering.* A soft heart will not be careful, what, or how much, but why, and upon what account, he suffers. Will neither sinfully shun the cross, nor run upon it unwarrantably. He waits for a call, and then

then follows. He is patient under the hand of the Lord, but not insensible ; can be touched with an affliction, though not offended at it. *The hand of the Lord hath touched me.* He suffers more than his own, his brethrens sufferings. His brethrens burthens, all lye on his shoulders. He weeps in their sorrows, bleeds in their wounds, his heart is bound in their Chains. As the care, so the trouble of all the Churches come daily upon him. *Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?* he espouses all the sufferings of Christ as his own. In all his afflictions he is afflicted.

2. Tenderness may be distinguished in respect of the *subject* of it ; and so there is a tenderness of

 } The Conscience.

 } The Will.

 } The Affections.

1. Tenderness of Conscience stands in these three things.

1. Clearness of Judgment.

2. Quickness of sight.

3. Uprightness or faithfulness.

1. *Clearness of Judgment.* When its well instructed, and understands *the rule* ; and can thence discern betwixt good and evil, Heb. 5. 14. There is a tenderness that proceeds from cloudiness ; *scrupulosity*, that fears every thing, stumbles at straws, starts at shadows ; makes sins, picks quarrels at Duties ; and so sometimes dare not please for fear of offending God. This is the sickness, or soreness of conscience ; not its soundness. It is the sound conscience that is truly tender.

2. *Quickness of sight*, and watchfulness. *I sleep, but my heart waketh.* It can espie the least sins, and smallest duties. It can see sin in the very temptation ; it can discover the least sin under the fairest face, and the least duty under the foulest vizor. Call it singularity, nicety, cloud it with reproaches ; yet conscience can discover light shining

ning through all the clouds; duty within, whatsoever unhandsome face it be presented in; the former stands in consciences understanding the rule, as was said, this in strait applying the rule to cases, and distinguishing of them by it. The truly tender *hath his eyes in his head*; and his eyes open, to discover and discern all that comes, be it good or evil, little or great. If but a thought comes in, what comes there, sayes conscience? what art thou? a friend, or an enemy? whence art thou? from God, or from beneath? it will examine whatever knocks, before any free admission. *O what a croud of evils do thrust into loose and careless hearts; the Devil comes in the croud, and is never discovered. If the eye be either dim, or asleep, there is entrance for any thing. Little do we think oft-times, who hath been with us, what losses and mischiefs we have sustained, while our hearts have been asleep; which had they been Wakeful and Watchful, might have been prevented.*

3. *Uprightness, and faithfulness.* Which discovers it self,

1. In giving charge concerning Duty.
2. In giving warning of sin.
3. In giving check for sin when committed.

1. *In giving charge concerning duty.* Look to it Soul, there is a duty before thee, which God calls thee to; do not say, it is no great hurt to let it alone, it is no great hurt to do it, it is questionable, *whether it be a duty or no?* many wiser than I think otherwise; do not say, it is a nicety, it is but a punctilio, it is meer folly, and preciseness; and there will be no end of standing upon such small matters, see to it, it is thy Duty, beware thou neglect it not; the baulking of the least duty, is the neglecting of the Great God of Glory.

2. *In giving warning of sin.* Take heed to thy self, sin lies at the door, thou art under a Temptation, the Devil is

is entring upon thee ; do not say, it is but a *little* sin ; as *little* as it is, there is Death and Hell in the bowels of it, look to it, it is sin, have *thou* nothing to do with it, keep thy self pure ; and though it run upon thee, shake it off.

3. After commission, it *gives check for it* ; reprovings, judging, and lashing the soul for it, where hast thou been *Gibazi* ? say not, thou hast been no where ; went not this heart with thee, and saw thee running after thy covetousness, gadding after thy pleasures, feeding thy pride, dandling thy lusts, playing the hypocrite, playing the Harlot from thy God, pampering thy Flesh, pleasing thine appetite ? and where hast thou been ? *What hast thou done Soul ? think not to excuse or mince the matter, it cannot be excused ; thou hast sinned against thy God, and now bear thy shame.* This is our heart smiting of us, 2 Sam. 24. *Our hearts condemning of us, 1 Joh. 3. 20. If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things.*

2. Tenderness of the Will, that stands in its flexibility, and pliability to the will of God. And this is that tenderness wherein chiefly stands the blessing of a soft heart ; an hard heart is stubborn, and obstinate ; thy Neck is as an Iron finew, and thy brow brass. *Thou wilt not be ruled, there is no bending thee, or turning thee out of thy course, thy Iron is too hard for the fire, it would not be melted, and for the hammer, it will not be broken ; there is no dealing with thee, thou art an untractable piece, thou wilt go neither led nor driven ; thine heart is set in thee to do evil, thy will is set upon sin, and thou art set upon thine own will.* The word which thou hast spoken to us in the Name of the Lord, we will not do ; but we will do whatsoever proceeds out of our own Mouth ; Jer. 44. 16, 17. *We will do what we will do ; Who is Lord over us ?* Psal. 12. And Jer. 2. 25. Thou saidst there is no hope : No, for we have loved

loved strangers, and after them we (will) go, *come what will of it, say what thou wilt against it*; Be silent Scriptures, hold thy Peace, Conscience, it is to no purpose to speak more, there is no hope of prevailing; we are at a point, we will take our own course. These are hard hearts, stubborn obstinate hearts.

When the iron sinew is broken, when the rebellion and stubbornness of the spirit is subdued, and tamed, and made gentle and pliable, then it becomes a tender heart.

There may be some tenderness in the Conscience, and yet the Will be a very stone; and as long as the Will stands out, there is no broken Heart. Conscience may be scared, and frighted, conscience may fly upon the sinner, *What dost thou mean Soul? whither are thy rebellions carrying thee? look to thy self, hearken, or thou wilt be lost ere thou art aware.* But however, God hath gotten Conscience on his side, yet the Devil still rides the Will; and there sin takes up its rest. There is a double resting of sin in the soul,

In Peace.

In Power.

1. *In Peace*, when it dwells and rules in the soul without disturbance or contradiction; when it carries all smoothly before it; when God lets it alone, and Conscience speaks not a word against it; when notwithstanding those armies of lusts, fighting against the soul, there is not so much as one weapon lifted up against them; not a prayer, not a tear, nor a wish for freedom, nor the least fear concerning the issue; this is the most dreadful hardness.

2. *In Power*. When though it can have *no peace*, yet it hath still a *Place* in the heart. Though it can have no quiet, but Conscience is still quarrelling with it, and warning it away, yet it still holds its power over the Will;

Will; the Master of the house is content to be its Servant. Oh how many persons are there, even amongst the Professors of Religion, who cannot sin in quiet, they are proud, or passionate, or intemperate, or covetous, or false in their words, in their dealings; they are formal, and hypocritical, and slight in their Duties, but they cannot go out with it with any quiet. *Conscience smites them for it, they feel many a pang, and deadly twinge in their heart, insomuch that sometimes they cry, and groan, and roar in their Spirits, O for Redemption, O for Deliverance from this False, this Proud, this Covetous and wicked heart; and yet after all this, the Will remains a Captive still, Sin holds its Power there, though it cannot carry it on in peace, though it cannot be proud, or play the Hypocrite, or be covetous, or an Oppressor, without some Galls, and gripes in the Soul; yet on it goes, the same trade is kept up, the same course is held on. God commands, cast ye out, cast ye out, come off from all your wickedness, and evil wayes, and I will receive you; No, though conscience would, the will cannot come, whatever rendings, and tearings; whatever terrors and torments, and worryings, such souls are at anytime under; whatever Stings, and Plagues, and Fires, they find their sins to be in their Souls and Bones; whatever wishings and wouldings they wring forth, that they were well rid of these Plagues; whilst the will is still from them, there is an hard heart, damnably hard; there is none of this heart of flesh. When the will is once broken loose from sin; when it will be content to let all go, and give up its self to the dominion of the Lord, there is a broken heart. Now speak Lord, and I will hear. Now call Lord, and I will answer. Now command me, impose on me what thou wilt, I will submit. None but the Lord; none but Christ; no other Lord nor Lover. I am thine Lord, thine own, do with thine own, demand of thine own, whatever thou pleasest. What God will*

will have me be, what God will have me do, that will I do, and be. No longer what I will, but the Will of the Lord be done. When it is come to this, there is a tender heart; there is the blessing of a broken spirit; the stone he hath taken away, he hath given an heart of flesh.

Christians, never trust to tears, never talk of terrours, trouble of Conscience, of the passionate workings and meltings, which at any time you feel upon your spirits, though there be something in these, as you shall see more by and by; *yet these are not the things you are to look at.* A subdued, tractable, willing, obedient heart, that is the tender heart, Isa. 1. 19. *If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the Land; but if ye refuse and rebell, ye shall be slain with the sword; the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.*

3. *Tenderness of the affections.* I shall instance only in three; viz.

Love.

Fear.

Sorrow.

The tenderness of Love is seen in its

Benevolence.

Jealousie.

1. In its Benevolence. Our goodness extends not to the Lord, but our good will does; our love can add nothing to him: Can a man be profitable to God? Job 22. If thou be righteous, what givest thou to him? Chap. 35. 7. *Yet though it can add nothing, it would not that any thing be detracted from him; whilst he can have no more, it would that he should have his own, all that is due, his due Praise, his due Honour, and Homage, and worship, and Subjection, from every Creature; it would have no abatement, not the least spot or stain upon all his Glory. What is an affront to God, is an offence to Love. Love beareth all things, saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 13. all things from God, all things from men,*

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And

And yet there are two things, the love of God cannot bear,

His Dishonour.

His Displeasure.

1. *His Dishonour.* Love would have God to be God, to live in the Glory of his Majesty, in the hearts and eyes of all the world. His reproach is grievous to him that loves, for this is the Cloud that takes God out of sight. He loves and honours, and would that God should be loved and honoured of all; he fears, and would that the whole world should fear him. He would receive in his own Breast, every Arrow that is shot against his Maker; he would that his own Name, and Soul might stand betwixt his God and all reproach, and dishonour. He would be vile, so the Lord may be glorious; so God may increase, he is content to decrease. *He is not so tender of his own heart and bowels, as of the holiness of his God.*— He would suffer, and dye, and be nothing, rather than that God should not be all in all. He would rather never think, nor speak, nor be, rather than not be in word, and thought, and life, *holiness to the Lord.* But O what, or where would he be, rather than his own *hand should be lift up against him!*

To see the Lord robbed of his holiness, *wronged* in his wisdom or his truth, or his sovereignty; to see sin, that Devil, to see the world that Idol, set up in the Throne, and the God of Glory made to stand aside as insignificant; to hear that Blasphemy, God is not worth this lust, or not worthy this labour, (and what is said less in every sin) is a sword in his breast. *The reproaches of them that reproached thee, are fallen upon me.* Love hath tasted of God, it hath fed on his fulness, it hath its nourishment from his sweetness, it hath been warmed in his bosome, all his goodness hath passed before it; upon this it lives and feeds; and having found and felt what the Lord is, its impatient
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that all his goodness should be clouded or belyed. Love kindled from Heaven, is keen; and the keen is a tender edge; the least touch of what offends, will turn it. Lam. 1. 20. *I am in distress, my bowels are troubled, mine heart is [turned] within me; for I have grievously rebelled.* Psal. 42. 3. *My tears have been my meat continually, while they daily say unto me, where is thy God!* Where is that care, and help, and that salvation of thy God, thou trustedst in! thy God is not such an one, as thou boastedst him to be; when I remember, when I hear such things, my soul is poured out within me. Love is large; he that loves hath a large heart, he can never receive or do too much; he would have all he can, and he would give all he hath to the Lord. He is tender how any thing be with-held that is due, how any thing be wasted elsewhere, that might be used to the Lord.

2. *His displeasure.* The displeasure of men it bears and rejoices; the wrath and rage of Satan, it bears and triumphs; though all the world, and Hell to boot, be displeased, and provoked, so God smiles 'tis well enough. Lord, *lift up the light of thy countenance upon me, and mine heart is glad;* Psal. 4. *Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled,* Psal. 30. 7.

Let him correct me, but O not in fury; let him smite, but not frown; let him kill me, so he will but love me. And though he smite, though he kill me, yet will I love and trust in him. O my God, let me rather dye in thy love, than live in thy displeasure; there is life in that death, this life is death to me. Let me not be dead whilst alive; turn away thine anger which kills my heart.

It is impatient of divine displeasure; and thence 'tis grievous to it that it does displease; thence it quarrels with sin, and falls so foul with it self for it, *Is this thy kindness to thy friend? lovest thou God, Soul? what, and yet provokest him thus daily? love, and yet neglect to seek*

and follow thy God? love, and yet so lame, and so slow, and so heavy, and so sparing in thy service to him? Is this all thy love will do? not deny thine ease, or thy pleasure, or thy liberty, or thine appetite, or thy company for the sake of the Lord? Chuse rather to pleasure thy friend, or thy flesh, than to please God? Is this thy love? Is this thy kindness to thy friend? O false heart, O unworthy, unworthy spirit; how canst thou look thy God in the face? how canst thou say I love thee, when thy heart is no more with him.

2. In its *Jealousie*. He that loves the Lord is jealous, and jealousie hath a tender edge; he is jealous, not of, but for the Lord, not of his God, but to himself, lest any thing should steal away his heart from God. Love would be chaste, would not bestow it self elsewhere; and yet is in great jealousie, it may be enticed, and drawn away. He that loves the Lord, there is not any thing, whether Wife, or Child, or Friend, or Estate, or Esteem, that gets near his heart, but he is jealous of them, lest they steal it away: *Get you down, and keep you lower, this heart is neither yours nor mine*; O my God, 'tis thine, 'tis thine Lord, take it wholly to thee, keep it to thy self, let no other Lovers be sharers with thee.

2. There is a *tendernefs of fear*; The tender heart is a *trembling heart*: The tendernefs of fear is manifested in its

Suspition.

Caution.

1. In its *Suspition*: The fearful are suspicious; they look farther than they see; he that is in dread, will be in doubt what may befall him, he suspects a surprizal; every Bush is a Thief, every Bait he doubts may have an hook under. There is a foolish and a causeless fear, and there is a prudent and an holy fear; this fear is a principle

ple of wisdom, *Psal.* 111. 10 *Prov.* 22. 3. *The prudent man foreseeth the evil*, but fools go on; the snare is never nearer, then to secure; bold venturous sinners never want woe, the Devil may spare his cunning, when he hath to do with such; nothing that looks like sin, offers it self to a tender heart, but he presently suspects it; every pleasant morsel, every pleasant cup, every pleasant companion that comes, any thing that tickles and gratifies the flesh, he looks through it ere he will touch with it, lest it betray his soul from God; there may be a snare in the dish, a snare in my cup, a snare in my company; and what if there should? he feeds himself with fear, dwells, walks, converses, works, recreates himself, with a trembling heart, and jealous eye.

2. In its *Caution*. Fear is wary, some Commanders have set their Scout-watch's unarmed, that fear might make them watchful. A fearful Christian will take heed what, and whom he trusts; he dares not trust himself in such company as may be a snare unto him; he dares not trust his heart among temptations, he'll keep the devil at a distance, he will not come near where his Nets do lie. Blessed is he that thus feareth alwayes. O the unspeakable mischief! O the multitudes of sin that we run upon, through our secure hearts! I never thought of it, I never dreamed of any such danger; O I am undermined, I am over-reached, I am surprized; my foot is in the snare, the Gin hath taken me by the heel, my soul is among Lyons, sin hath gotten hold on me, mine heart is gone ere I was aware, the Enemy hath come in and carried it away, hath given it to lust, to the world, to pleasure, to divide it among themselves; my faith hath failed, my Conscience is defiled, my love is grown cold, my Grace withered, my comforts wasted, my Peace broken, and my God, O! where is he become? *Woe is me, the evil that I feared [not] is come upon me; had I feared, I had*

not fallen: O that I had been wise, had kept my watch, had stood upon my guard; had I thought, had thought I had escaped all this danger: O Christians, be wise in season, and take heed of the fools, too late [had I wist.]

3. There is a tenderness of sorrow; Sorrow is the melting of the heart, the stone dissolved, sorrow is the wound of the heart; a wound is tender, love is tender, and therefore Godly sorrow, which is the sorrow of Love; you may call it a Love-sickness, Love is both the pain and pleasure of a mourning heart, it is love that wounds, and love that heals; it is both the weapon and the oyl; this sorrow hath its joy, the melted is the most joyful heart; it is love that makes it sad, it therefore weeps because it loves, and it is love that makes it glad too; It therefore joys because in its sorrows it sees it loves. 'Tis love that makes the wound, the matter of this sorrow being love abus'd. What hast thou done Soul? who hast thou despised? against whom hast thou lift up thy self? thou hast sinned, thou hast sinned, and hast thereby smitten and grieved thy God that loves thee, and whom thou lovest. Thou hast but one friend in Heaven, and Earth, and him thou hast abused; to pleasure thy lust, thou hast pierced thy Lord, thou hast transgressed his *Commandments*, and trampled upon his *Compassions*; hast broken his *Bonds*, and kick'd at his *Bowels*; his *greatness*, and his *goodness*; his *Law*, and his very *Love* hath been despised by thee; him who loved thee hast thou smitten. Is this thy kindness to thy friend? O vile ungracious, unkind, unthankful, unnatural heart; what hast thou done?

Put all this now together, and you have the heart of flesh which the *Covenant* promises, a *Tender Heart*, an heart that is tender of sin and duty, that carefully shuns sin, or is sure to smart for it; that neither flights sin, nor duty; that says not of the one or the other, 'tis but a little one; that can feel sufferings, but not fret at them, a *Tender*

der Conscience ; that will neither wink at sin, nor excuse the sinner ; that will not hold the sinner guiltless ; nor say unto the wicked, thou art righteous ; that will not be smitten, but it will smite again, that will give due warning, and due correction, a flexible tractable heart ; that will not resist and rebel ; that says unto the Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ? and will not say of any thing, he will have ; *any thing but this*. A willing Do-
ctile heart, stiff against nothing but sin, that a word from Heaven will lead to anything. An *Heart of Love*, that bears good will to the Lord, and all that he does, or requires, in which good will lies, radically every good work ; that says not of any duties or sufferings, this is too Great, or of any sin, this is Nothing ; that would be any thing or nothing, so God may be all. That would rather be displeased, than displease ; that is not displeased where God is pleased. A *trembling Heart*, that fears more than it sees ; and flies from what it fears, whom fear makes to beware. A *melting Heart*, a mourning heart, that wounds it self in the wounds it hath given to the Lord, and his Name ; that can *Grieve* in Love, and can Love and *Grieve*, where it cannot weep. In sum, 'tis an heart that can feel, that can bleed, that can weep ; or at least that can yield and stoop, where it cannot weep, nor feel but little, that will easily be commanded, where it is not sensibly melted, this is a soft heart, this is the heart of flesh, I will take away the stone, and give them an heart of flesh.

O what a blessing is such an heart ! what a plague is an hard heart ! Oh what *Prisoners* are the men of this world : in prison under Satan, in prison under Sin, bound under a curse, shut up under unbelief and impatience : the hard heart, is the Iron-gate, that shuts them in that they cannot get out, *Rom. 2*. Oh what an *hospital* is this world become, of blind, and lame, and sick, and cripples, and wounded creatures ! whence are all the ca-
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calamities and distresses that befall them, but from the hardness of their hearts? the stone in their hearts breeds all their diseases, brings all their calamities: hath blinded their eyes, and broken their bones, and wasted their estates: there is not one misery that befalls them, but they may write over it, *this is the hardness of my heart.* Oh what a Sodom is this world become, for wickedness as well as wrath: what drunkenness, what adulteries, what oaths, what blasphemies, and all sorts of monstrous sins do everywhere abound! whence is all this, but from the hardness of mens hearts? if you say 'tis from other causes; 'tis from unbelief, from ignorance, from impotence, from temptations; let it be granted: yet still 'tis from hardness of heart. They are wilfully ignorant, wilfully weak, wilfully run into temptations; they shut their eyes, and stop their ears, they will not see, they will not believe. Oh what losses do they sustain! how many Sabbaths are lost? how many Sermons are lost? how many reproofs, counsels, corrections are lost? a Gospel lost, and souls thereby like to be lost for ever! oh what prodigies are they become? under all this sin and misery? and yet merry, jolly, laughing, and singing, and sporting, and feasting, and braving it out, as if nothing ailed them. Feeling nothing of all that is come upon them, and fearing nothing of all that is coming. Warn them, reprove them, beseech them, it is all but preaching to a stone. It may be you have sometimes wondred, to see a company of Thieves in prison, to be Drinking and Carousing, and making merry, when they know that in few dayes they must be brought out and hanged. When thou wondrest at these, wonder at thy self, What bitter complaints do we sometimes hear even from the best of Saints! Oh this hard heart, oh this stubborn spirit; I cannot mourn, I cannot stoop, I cannot submit, *Isa. 63. 17. Why hast thou hardened our heart from thy fear?* Or why hast thou left us, or given us up to an hard heart? why hast thou not softened, and humbled,

humbled, and broken us? thou hast humbled us, and we are not humbled; broken us, and we are not broken; thou hast broken our Land, broken our Peace, broken our Backs, but the stone is not yet broken; oh for one breach more Lord; our hearts, our hearts, let these be once broken; our streets mourn, the Cities of our Solemnities mourn, the ways of *Sion* mourn, oh when wilt thou give us a mourning Spirit?

Oh what sorrow-bitten Souls are the Saints, for want of sorrow? *I mourn Lord, I lament, I weep, but it is because I cannot mourn, or lament as I should; If I could mourn as I ought, I could be comforted; If I could weep, I could rejoice; if I could sigh, I could sing; if I could lament, I could live; I die, I die, mine heart dies within me, because I cannot cry: I cry Lord, but not for sin, but for tears for sin; I cry Lord, my Calamities cry, my Bowels cry, my Bones cry, my Soul cries, my Sins cry, Lord for a broken heart; and behold, yet am not I broken.*

The Rocks rent, the Earth quakes, the Heavens drop, the Cloud weeps, the Sun will blush, the Moon be ashamed, the Foundations of the Earth will tremble at the presence of the Lord, but this heart will neither break nor tremble; O for a broken heart! If this were once done, might my Soul have this wish, thenceforth my God might have his Will; what would be hard, if my heart were tender? Labour would be easie, Pains would be a pleasure, Burthens would be light; Neither the Command nor the Cross would be any longer grievous, nothing would be hard but sin. Fear, where art thou? come and Plough upon this Rock; Love, where art thou? come and thaw this Ice, come and warm this dead lump; come and enlarge this straitned spirit, then shall I run the way of his Commandments.

O Brethren, how little, how very little of this Tenderness is there to be found amongst the meanest of Christians? The sacrifice of God is a broken heart; Oh how far is the
Lord

Lord go to find himself such a sacrifice? we do but cast stones up to Heaven, we lift up our hearts; it is a wonder, that such hearts as we carry do not break themselves; that our Marble weeps no; that if nothing else will do it, our hardness doth not make us relent; that we should so labour under, and complain of, and yet not be sick of the stone.

Broken hearts, yielding and relenting Spirits, tender Consciences, Oh where are they? afraid of sin? tender of Transgressing? or mourning under it? when shall it once be? our Lusts no more broken? our pride, our passion, our envy, our earthliness no more broken? So venturous on Temptation, so bold on Sin, such liberty taken to Transgress, such Mincing, and Palliating, and excusing of Sin, as we find? Is this our brokenness? we are tender, 'tis true; but of what? of Dishonouring God, of abusing Grace, of neglecting Duty, of denying Conscience, of wounding our Souls? No, 'tis of our flesh that we are so tender, tender of labour, tender of trouble, tender of our carcasses, of our credits, of our Names and reputations; a tender shoulder, a tender hand, a tender foot; they can bear nothing, nor do nothing; nothing can touch our flesh, nothing can touch our Idols, our ease, or our Estates, but we shrink, and smart, and are put to pain. God may be smitten, and we feel it not; the Gospel may be smitten, the Church may be smitten, Conscience may be smitten, and it moves us not; We can fear an affliction, fear a reproach. Oh did we so much fear a Temptation, or a sin! we cannot want Bread but we feel it, we cannot want Cloaths, or an House, or a Friend, but we feel it; We cannot want our sleep, our quiet, our Pleasure, our Respects from men, but we feel it, any thing that pinches upon our Flesh pierces our heart. We cannot pine, or languish in our Bodies, but we feel it; a Fever, or an Ague, or a Consumption, or Drop-sie, or a bodily sickness; Oh it makes us sick at heart,
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a froward yoke-fellow, an unthrifty servant, an ill neighbour, a scoff, a slight cannot be born, but Oh ! how much Sin can be born, while our flesh will bear nothing ? Oh how can Conscience bear and never complain ?

Christians consider, when our flesh must be thus tendred, what ever come of it ; must be tenderly fed, must have soft Rayment, soft Lodging, soft usage, deal gently with it, though to maintain it, Conscience must be racked, and wrack'd, and wasted.

When our Wills cannot be crossed, our appetites cannot be denied, but a tumult follows, the Soul is in an uproar ; and conscience mean while, must be denied, rated, and must go away in silence.

When the Word works no more, when the prints of it are not received ; the power of it is resisted, when the rod works no more ; when our stripes make no sign, when the lashes on our backs fall all besides our hearts ; when we remain so vain, and so wanton, so wilful, and so carnal, and so earthly ? after the Lord hath been Preaching, and whipping of us into a better frame, when we stand upon our terms, keep our distances, our animosities, our heats, and heights of spirit, our censurings, our quarrellings one with another, Christian with Christian, Professour with Professour, after the Lord hath been beating us together, to make us friends, and all to learn us more Humility and Charity, Is this our brokenness ? is this our tenderness ? when upon any of the Lords rougher dealing with us, spitting in our faces, throwing us on our backs, trampling us in the dirt, we are yet no more brought on our knees ; Is this our brokenness ? when the Lord hath been awakening us out of sleep, putting his Spurs and Goads in our sides, to quicken us on our way ; calling to us, *Arise sleepers, put on sluggards, stir up your spirits, mend your pace.* I will not be put off as I have been ; no more such loitering, and idling, and trifling, and halting, as hath been, I must have other manner
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of service, other manner of praying, and hearing, and walking, and working, then hath been; be zealous, and amend, more labour, more care, more watchfulness, more activity, more of the Spirit and Soul of what you profess: when the Lord hath been thus goading, and spurring us on, and though our flesh feels; yet our hearts will not feel, nor answer the Goad or Spur; Is this an argument of tenderness?

When great duties are little, and lesser are none; when great sins are infirmities, and little ones are nothing; when lying and defrauding, when false weights, false wares, and false dealings; when defaming, back-biting, tale-bearing, railing, reviling, do stand for little more than cyphers; when fellowship, and familiarity, with evil men in their sins; when compliance with, or connivance at their wickedness; when sinful courtings, and complementings of such, to the fleshing them, and hardning them in their wayes, do pass for vertues and civilities, when frothy, wanton discourse, and communication; when scoffing and making a sport at the sins, or infirmities of others; when sinful vain jesting, wherein rather Conscience than wit must be deny'd; when all these pass for our ornaments, rather then our evils, Where's our tenderness.

When upon the auditing of our Accounts, the examining our Books, and reckoning up our Scores; where a Talent is owing, we bid our conscience take this Bill, and write down a Shekel; where twenty or one hundred sins to be reckoned for, take thy Bill, and write down ten or but one, and that a little one, when we are so free in *multiplying*, and so false in *numbring* our iniquities; where's our tenderness.

Well Christians, the Lord hath promised a tender heart, to make these stones flesh; and something possibly is done already upon you, towards it; O let this sad sight now laid before you, this view of what is wanting,
have

have some *influence* upon the making it up; let the sense of *no more done*, work what is yet undone; as is said before, let your unbrokenness break your hearts; let the stone that yet remains, make your flesh to bleed. If you yet feel no more, may you at least feel this, that you feel not.

CHAP. XIII.

An Heart to love the Lord.

IV. **A**N Heart to love the Lord. Deut. 30. 6. *The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.* Love is the soul of the new creature; the closure of the soul with God. He that hath most of God, is most a Christian; and he that hath most of love, hath most of God, God is love.

In the opening of this love to God, we shall consider

Its { Object.
Act.

I. Its Object. The Object of Divine love is God. God is good, and good is amiable. God is all good: *There is none good but one, that is God.* God is essentially good, goodness in the abstract; he is infinitely excellent, he is all perfection. In this one attribute, all the rest of the Attributes of God are included, and this in each of them. However, the Scriptures speaking to our capacities, describe God & his Glorious Attributes, in their several and distinct notions; yet in each one all are included; each one is infinite, and infinite perfection, is essentially all perfection. *God is originally good*, the fountain and pattern of all that moral good that is in the creatures: he is bountiful, and gracious, ready to do them good; and he is the felicitating end, or the blessedness of the soul. The goodness of God to his creatures, according to its different respects

respects to them, hath its different and various appellations. As it is freely bestowed, it is grace: as it respects them as *needy*, so it is bounty; as in misery, so it is mercy and compassion: as provoking, so it is patience: as it intends their good, so it is love: as it answers both their necessities and capacities, so it is all-sufficiency. All these, his bounty, mercy, compassion, patience, love, all-sufficiency, all these are in one word, his goodness, and goodness calls for love. The object of this love is God, Particularly,

1. God in himself.
2. God in Christ.
3. God in all the things of God.

1. *God in himself*, as he is infinitely excellent, (as before) and so worthy of all love. God is to be loved in himself, and for himself, for his own worthiness. God is good in himself, and therefore to be loved by himself.

1. *God in Christ*. In whom alone, considering us as sinners, he can be said to be good to us.

There is a four-fold incentive of Love.

Perception.

Proportion.

Propriety.

Possession.

1. *Perception*, or the apprehension or understanding of the object to be loved; we must know before we can love; now God cannot immediately be seen by mortals; he dwelleth in light, but that light is to us invisible. Christ is the Glass, in which this Glory may be seen. We cannot see God but through a vail of flesh, in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 4. *No man hath seen God at any time, but the only begotten of the Father, who is in the bosom of the Father, and hath revealed him.*

2. *Proportion*; And there is a double proportion requisite.

1. In respect of quantity, there must be sufficiency.

2. In respect of quality, there must be suitableness.

God himself is proportioned to us, consider us as *rational* creatures, and in our state of *innocency*; is both a sufficient and suitable good; but God in Christ only, being considered as *lapsed creatures*, in a state of sin.

God in Christ, is a God of pity and compassion to us; a God of patience, a God of mercy, with whom is plenteous redemption. A God pardoning iniquity, and passing by transgression: loving us in our low estate, loving us and pitying us, loving us and pardoning us, loving us and washing us, loving us and saving us from our sins, and from the wrath to come. And such love is the great flame that kindles love; love breaking forth out of a cloud of wrath, and fury, and displeasure; abused love, provoked love, and yet forgiving love; to whom much is forgiven, they will love much.

3. *Propriety*. What's good, good for us, and [our own] good, that carries our hearts. We must love our own good because we most love our selves. Our love to God is heightened from our due self-love; there is a *sinful* self-love; when either we love that for a self, which is not our self; when we love our flesh and fleshly interest; or when we love our selves inordinately, more than God, and God only for our selves; and there is a *lawful* self-love; when we love our selves, in the Lord, and for the Lord. And the more we thus love our selves, the more is the Lord loved by us; and the more he is our own, the more love he hath. Now in Christ the Lord is [our] God. Our own God; even our own God, Psal. 67. 6. O God thou art [my] God, and I will praise thee. Thou art my God, and I will love thee.

The Lord is God, and we therefore love him; the Lord is good, gracious, merciful, and we therefore love him, yea, and ought to love him, whether he be ours or no; but when both meet, he is God, and our God, he is good and our good; gracious, merciful, all-sufficient, and all this to us; hence is our love made perfect in us.

4. *Possession*; we can love at a distance, an absent good, a good that is only possible; there's love in hope; but by how much the nearer *good* is to us, (that is, really so) by so much the more attractive and acceptable it is. 'Tis then most in our *hearts*, when 'tis most in our *hands*. Indeed those things which have only *speciem boni*, that are *fancied* good; or those things that are *finite* good, and good over-rated; that are judged better than they are, are loved most at a distance; because when they come to hand, we see our mistakes. But that which is what it seemed; much more, that which is above our thoughts, beyond our expectations, *infinite* good; by how much the nearer, it is ever the dearer to us. All worldly good is most valued (at least by carnal hearts) at a distance; they promise themselves more contentment in it, than it hath to pay them; their possession is their disappointment. Whilst they Lusted, they Idolized, they adored; but when they have tasted, and eaten, it comes out at their Nostrils. Or else they sit down with the shame of the disappointed; they are either surfeited, or an hungry still. *Is this all? all you can do for me? all the pleasure, and comfort, I shall have of you? is all my expectation of Delight and Satisfaction, come to no more but this?* Miserable Comforters are you all! possession and fruition is the proof of all things. And vanity proved, is the less loved. But God being an all-sufficient, incomprehensible good; by how much the nearer to us, by how much the more he is ours, by so much the more we prize and love him, because now we find (when we have him, we enjoy him) that before *the one half was not told us*.

Now in Christ, we have not only a propriety in God, but in some degree, a present possession. *He that hath the Son, [hath] the Father also*. We see his light, we feel his love, we taste of his goodness, we enjoy his presence we have God with us, we have Good in us, we have fellowship with him, he dwelleth in us, and we in him,

him, and hence we love, and herein we rejoyce.

3. *In all the things of God*, in his Word, Ordinances, Sabbaths, Saints, in graces, duties, in all his wayes, the Saints love God, and love his word, 'tis God in the word they love; they love God, and they love Ordinances and Sabbaths and Saints: it is God in all these they love; they love the wayes, and works, and all the dispensations of God, and it is God in them all they love, they see God in every thing, and they love God where-ever they see him. They look on all these things with an other eye, & therefore imbrace them with another heart than other men.

The Saints love to the things of God, is their love to God: for it is God in them (as was said) that they love; their love to them is founded either on

Their { Participation of God; or,
Relation to God.

Or else you may say they love the things of God, because they are

The Off-spring }
The Images } of God.
The Chariots }

1. The things of God, are the Off-spring of God; as the Saints are born from above, so all the things of God, are ~~by~~ they came down from above, and therefore may also be called as the Apostle stiles them, *τὰ ἄνω* things above, *Phil. 3. 1, 2.* If ye be risen with Christ seek those things that are above; set your affections on things above; things above, and the things of God, come all to one; whatsoever is from God, and belongs to his heavenly Kingdome, is divine, and heavenly; and he that loveth him that begets, therefore loveth those which are begotten, and whatsoever proceedeth from him.

2. *The Word and the Saints are the Images of God*, the character and impression of God are upon them; the grace in the Saints, and the holy truths in the Word are the very face of Christ, is full of grace and truth, and this is their Rule, love God and love his Image

3. The things of God are the *Chariots of God*. He that makes the Clouds his Chariots, makes also his Word, and his Ordinances, and his Ministers, his Chariots, wherein he Rides down into those lower parts to give the world a meeting. When ministers come, and the Word comes down, God comes down in them to visit his people; as 'twas said of *Paul*, so 'tis true of *Appolos*, and *Cephas*, and all the dispensers of the Gospel, they are *chosen Vessels to bear his Name*, before the Sons of men; and as they are the Chariots in which God comes down, so are they also the *Waggons* which he hath sent them, to fetch them to himself; The Saints *send up their hearts in their Duties, their hearts in their Prayers, in their praises unto God*. Old *Israel's heart leap'd*, when he saw the *Waggons* which *Joseph* had sent. *Oh what love doth the Psalmist express, to the House and Court of the Lord! O how amiable are thy Tabernacles! I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go up into the House of the Lord.* He was glad to go thither, because thence he hoped to be carried higher, from the *Mountain to the Mansion*; from *Mount Zion here below, to Jerusalem which is above*.

It's the duty, and the delight of the Saints to be ascending Heaven-ward, they are *dead with Christ*, they are *risen with Christ*; and 'tis not as they would with them, but when they are *ascending up with Christ*, they are *dead with Christ, by Repentance and Humiliation*, they are *risen with Christ, by Faith and Sanctification*, and they *ascend with Christ, by Love and holy Affection*; this is their *Chariot of fire, a Chariot within a Chariot, that through Duties and Ordinances, rides up in its own flames to the God of love*.

Or if you will, the Ordinances of God, are our *Jacobs Ladder* reaching from Heaven to Earth, by which Angels descend, and Souls ascend, God comes down, and hearts go up, Praises go up, and Blessings come down; thou hast not proved what an Ordinance is, what Prayer means, or Preaching means, or Sacraments mean,
that

that hath not seen God coming down, nor felt thine hear ascending by them; he that hath felt this, will say, here let me dwell, let others be where they will, amongst their flocks, amongst their herds, upon their beds, or at their cups, amongst their Harlots, or in their houses, *It is good for me to be here.*

No wonder Christians, that carnal hearts are such strangers to the word, can so well sit out at Duties, and can Want Ordinances; Preaching, and Praying, and Sabbaths, they can spare, and not feel their want; what wonder? What is Heaven to Earth? What is God to flesh? These Chariots would carry them away from their Gods, carry them out of their own Country, into a strange Land, where they have neither possession nor acquaintance: But oh! what a sad wonder is it, that Saints should go up so often into the Chariots, and yet be gotten no nearer home, that they should be still so much on the Earth, that have been so often mounted for Heaven; that those hearts should be still on the dunghills, whose feet are so often on the Mountain of the Lord; that the Waggons should be so often sent down, and go up empty, scarce an heart sent up in them; yea, that they should be so far from God, when God is among them. Where's your love Christians? how is it that it is still below? what have you here? your City is above, your home is above, your God, your Jesus, your Treasure is above, Oh how is it, that where your Treasure is, your hearts be not also? hear from God, and not God with the messenger? send up to Heaven your eyes, your hands, your prayers, your complaints, your promises, and still leave your hearts below? send up hearts to Heaven, and let them return again down to this Earth? Remain Earth, and Flesh, and Filth, and Vanity, after so much converse or pretence to it, with the holy God of Spirits: Lovest thou God, when thou canst so often go where he is, and not care to see him? or if thou meet

him, canst let him go without a blessing? or if he bless thee, canst go presently and exchange thy Fathers blessing for a Mess of pottage? canst lose a duty in a dinner, the comforts and revivings of a Sermon, of a Sacrament, of a Sabbath, in 24 hours carnal converse in the world? did we love our God more, certainly we should be more with him, and to better purpose. His meetings would be more precious, and the fruits of them more lasting. We should neither go away without his blessing, nor throw it away when we had gotten it.

Thus much for the object of Love.

2. Its Act. *Love is a natural affection. The love of God in the souls clasping or closing with the Lord. It is the expansion, or going out of the heart, in its strength, after God, the uniting or knitting of the soul with God, with a complacency and acquiescence in him.*

There are three things included in this love.

1. *The strength of the heart making out after God.* This is that which is commonly called our *amor desiderii*, or our love of desire, the breathing, or thirsting, or panting of the heart after God, *Psal. 42. 1.* The heart working God-wards with its might; loving him above all things; desiring him above all things, & that both *intensive* with the greatest vigor and intention, and adequate, as its compleat and adequate object. God is its All. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee.*

2. *The uniting of the Soul with God.* Our cleaving to him. By love heart cleaves to heart, Soul cleaves to Soul. Its said of *Sechem, Gen. 34. 3.* that his heart cleaved unto *Dinah*. He loved her with his heart, she was gotten into his heart, and there his heart holds her. *Acts. 18. 23.* *Barnabas* exhorts the Church, that *with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.* It is the knitting of the Soul with God. Its said, *1 Sam. 1. 18.* *That the Soul of Jonathan was knit with the Soul of David, and Jonathan loved*

loved him as his own Soul. And of Jacob, Gen. 44. 30. to express his tender love to Benjamin, 'tis said, his life was bound up in the Lads life. Of the multitude of believers we read, Acts 4. 32. that they were all of one heart, and of one soul. Their love had knit them up all into one. By love we are one with God, and he with us. It is the souls willing of God, as I may so spake. Willing of God to its self, and willing it self, and all to God; all praises, all honour, all blessedness to him. Be thou mine, Lord; nothing less, nothing else. Be thou mine, I need no less, I desire no more; Let me be thine, be to thee, be for thee, thy servant, thy sacrifice, or what thou wilt; and let all mine be thine; mine heart and my hand, and my tongue, and my time, and mine interest. Let all thine be to thee; thy Heavens and thy Earth, with every person, with every creature in them. Let every heart, every mouth, every limb, every creature, be a praise to the Lord. Let the Lord live, and blessed be my Rock; let the God of my Salvation be exalted. Let every knee bow, let every tongue confess unto God. This is the *amor unionis*, our love of union, as 'tis called. And 'tis the heart, the very essence of saving-love, wherein are included both our accepting of God, and our surrender or resignation of our selves unto God. *Amor non est nisi dominum amantis in amatum*. And our wishing and willing all glory, dominion and blessedness to him. And so here also is our *amor benevolentie*, our love of benevolence. All these may be included in that opening of the heart, mention'd Acts 16. 14. It's there said, that the Lord opened Lydia's heart. The heart is then savingly opened, when it freely sets out it self upon God, all its streams run in to the Lord; and when it takes in, and takes down God into the depth of the soul. The heart thus opened to the Lord, when God is come in, will close upon him. Abide with me; thou hast entered upon thine habitation, oh let this be thy dwelling for ever. Only

this must be farther added, that with God it takes in all things of God, his Word, his Ordinance, his Ways, and all his Dispensations : With his Love, his Laws, with his Comforts, his Counsels, with his Counsels, his Corrections. With thee, I accept of all that's thine ; both thy yoke and thy cross, thy self, Lord, thy love, Lord, and what thou wilt with thee.

3. *The Souls taking pleasure, and taking up its rest in him.* This is call'd our *Amor complacentia*. Where we love there will be a delightful stay or immoration of the minde upon God. *Ubi amor, ibi oculus.* The object dwells in the eye; we are still looking where we love *Anima est ubi amat*. When I awake, I am still with thee ; there his thoughts are, of him is his meditation all the day long.

My mediation of him shall be sweet. He that loves, *dwelleth in God, I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.* And why there ? why there his God dwells, and therefore there his soul takes up its dwelling. There is also an *acquiescence* of the heart in him. *Return unto thy rest, O my Soul.* But this is not felt, till love hath obtained : Till the soul feels itself to love, and to have what it loves ; to love and to be beloved ; to accept, and to be accepted of God. When it comes to this, then I have enough. *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine.* And here is the sweetness of Religion, the marrow and fatness of godliness, *the pleasure of love* : When I love, I can rest ; when I can rest, I can rejoyce ; when I feel my self to love, I know I am beloved, and then what is there wanting ? where love is a stranger, joy is not known ; we can never take comfort in any thing, but in that which we love. VVhen take we pleasure in eating, but when we have meat that we love ; what is a friend, or a wife or a child, when we love them not ; what is society or communion, where love hath not first made an union ? *Can two walk together except they be agreed,* with little comfort sure ; they would be better pleased, were they

they parted a sunder. 'Tis love that is the pleasure of our lives. 'Tis love that makes Heaven sweet ; there we shall have our fill of joy, because there we have our fill of love : Heaven would be no Heaven, God himself could not be the joy ; if he were not the *love* of his Saints. What bitter draughts will love sugar? sin, and lusts, and all the filth of the flesh, are sweet morsels to carnal hearts; 'tis meet they love ; God is nothing, Christ is nothing to them ; *What is thy beloved more then other beloveds?* Religion is a bondage to them, holiness a weariness ; not the labours only, but the joys of the Saints are empty and unsavory things ; *there are no feasts but Love-feasts.* Love is both the *best dish*, and the *only sauce* to every dish ; 'tis the best dish ; he that feeds on divine love will never complain of a short meal ; and 'tis the only sauce for every dish ; 'tis but unsavory meat that is not seasoned with love , we may a little change the proverb, *Love is the best sauce* : Be the meat never so excellent, it will not relish if it be not loved. Love will make any thing go down. When it puts such a sweetness into sin, that even death and hell will down with carnal hearts for its sake, oh what a feast will love make of holiness and glory ! get love to Christ, love to Religion, and you will never demand, *Where is the blessedness ? where is the sweetness ?*

Love will sweeten both the comforts and the exercises of Religion, 'twill make my duties sweet, yea, and sufferings sweet : there are two things that are naturally sweet to love,

To please. To praise.

1. He that loves, will *Please*, and observe whom he loves : How careful are such to watch themselves, that they grieve not their friend ? what study does love put them upon, to finde out what's grateful and acceptable ? Acceptable looks, acceptable language, acceptable entertainment ; what wilt thou Lord ? what wilt thou

have me to be? a servant? a door-keeper? a servant of servants for thee? I will be nothing but what thou wilt, any thing that thou wilt have me. What wilt thou have me to do Lord? let me know thy will, appoint me my work. *O that my wayes were so directed, that I might keep thy Statutes.* What wilt thou have of me? wilt thou have mine idols, mine ease, or mine honour, or my pleasure, or my house, or mine estate? wilt thou have mine *Isaacs*? is there any thing dearer to me than other, that might be an offering to the Lord; wilt thou have my liberty or my life? behold all is at thy feet, I can keep back nothing thou callest for.

Hence love is said to be the *fulfilling of the Law*; there is in this good will, radically every good work. It would *walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work.* Love is generous, it would do great things, noble things; what shall I do for him whom my soul honours? O for a gift that might be worthy of him! but I have nothing, my goodness extendeth not to thee; it would give more than it owes; but where it cannot do so, where it cannot be generous, yet it would be just; it would level all accounts, and pay all debts; love would have nothing but love owing. It would give to all their due; it would not die in the debt of a servant, of a stranger, much less (could it help it) would it default from the God of Glory. That's the daily charge of love, *pay what thou owest.* Its Receipts and Returns are a pleasure to it; any thing that comes down from heaven, and every present it has to send thither, is a joy to love. This is the message that both speak, *happy soul, thou lovest, and art beloved.* It catches at all opportunities to send up messages of love, and knoweth no fitter messenger to send by, than by the hand of Duty: every duty is dispatched with this superscription, *The tribute of Love.*

Love is the *spring* that sets all our wheels a going the *Stream*, in which all our works are formed; the *fire* in the heart,

heart, that vents it self in our words & wayes. *The fire kindled; then spake I with my tongue.* Love is to a Saint, what malice is to Satan; that which gives force to all his actings. Satans temptations are called fiery darts, and this, not only because they are headed and barbed with fire, as poysoned arrows, they burn where they hit, they set sin on fire, they set the soul on fire, burning with lust and wickedness, but because they are *winged with fire*, and scorched with fire; the bullet is fired out of the Gun, and thence it flies so fiercely. 'Tis the malice of Satans heart, that fires out all his darts. What Malice doth with Satan, that doth love with Saints; it sets the heart in a flame of holy zeal and activity for God, *Jer. 20. 9. Thy word was to me as fire,* (it hath kindled a fire there) *I was weary with forbearing.* An heart of love is weary, not of action, but of Idleness: *Weary with forbearing*, not with doing; never weary of doing much, ever weary of doing nothing. *O God, my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed*, saith the Psalmist, *I will sing and give thanks.* Love will add, O God, mine heart is fiered, my heart is fiered; there is a flame kindled; mine heart burneth in holy desires and zeal for thee, and where love hath set the heart a burning, the heart will set the hand a working, and the feet a running.

2. He that loves, will praise whom he loves. Praise is comely, and praise is a pleasure to the upright in heart. 'Tis the delight of love, to be speaking of the perfections, of the vertues, of the beauties, of the excellencies of her beloved. The Spouse in the Book of *Canticles*, whose whole language is all love, her heart is so full that her lips overflow with the mention of the excellencies of Christ: *My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousands:* His head is fine gold, his eyes Doves eyes, his cheeks a bed of spices, his lips are lilies, hands are gold-rings, his legs pillars of marble, his countenance excellent, his mouth sweet; yea, he is also-

altogether lovely; this is my beloved, and this is my friend, O Daughters of Jerusalem, Cant. 5. *Who is a God like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the City of our God. Thy Mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, thy faithfulness reacheth unto the Clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great Mountains, thy judgements are a great deep. How excellent is thy loving kindness, O Lord? therefore the sons of men, put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. I will speak of the glorious honour of thy Majesty, and of thy wonderful works: the Lord is gracious, and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy. The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. Let all thy works praise thee, O Lord; let thy Saints bless thee; let them speak of the Glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy power; let them abundantly utter the memory of thy goodness, and sing of thy righteousness. O my God, thou art all Love, all goodness, all Grace, all Glory; O let thy servant be all praise. Let this heart be an altar, and every service a sacrifice; let this mouth be a trumpet, and every word a Psalm; let my breath be as incense, and every member a censer. Let all that is within me, my soul with all its powers; let all that is without me, my body with all its members, shout for joy, and sing forth the high praises of God. This is the voice of Love.*

And now you have another excellency of the new heart laid open to your view; *Love*: An heart to love.

Christians, prize this precious Grace, prize it, and you will write down this word also, among the great, and precious promises; and if you would prize it aright, take your estimate of it from its *worth*, and its *want*, as we use to prize Jewels for their

Excellency.

Rarity.

1. Prize it according to its *worth* and *excellency*.

W 17,

Why, what is the worth? *Cant. 8. 7. If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be contemned.* The whole world is not of that value, to be a price for love; no, it must come by gift, it's not to be bought for money; love is worth as much as a soul, and that's more than all the world. *What shall it profit, a man to win the whole world, and lose his own soul?* Love is as much worth as all Religion; 'tis the soul and the substance of all Religion; all the Graces, the duties and exercises of it, are only valued according to the love that is in them: What is knowledge, faith, hope, patience, without love? what is prayer, fasting, alms, without charity? They are worth nothing, shall I say? nay, they are nothing; if I had all knowledge, and all faith, and were all prayer, and all labour, and all suffering, and had not charity, I were nothing: Love is worth as much as Heaven is worth, as Christ, as God is worth to us. God is love, and God is not, if love be not in us. Dost thou prize thy substance? Is thy house, or thy money, or thy Lands, any thing to thee? Dost thou value thy Soul? Is Religion, is Heaven, is Christ: is God himself, of any account with thee? Then prize the love of God; without love, God is no God to thee, Christ is no Christ to thee, Heaven is no Heaven for thee, better thou hadst no soul, no being than no love. O prize the love of God, prize and seek, prize and pray; pray as for thy life, as for thy soul, as for thy everlasting Kingdome; *Lord, let me love thee:* Get love, and get all; Love, and thou wilt be holy; Love, and thou wilt be humble; Love, and thou wilt be fruitful; Love, and thou wilt please, praise, and enjoy thy God; Love, and thou wilt fear, serve, suffer, and die for him; Love, and thou shalt live; prize love, prize it according to its worth. And

2. Prize it according to its rarity. Things excellent are rated something more for their scarcity; scarcity raises

raises the Market ; the Word of God was precious in those days, 1 Sam. 3. 1. that is, when there was a famine of the Word, when there was no open Vision : O were the love of God as precious as 'tis rare ! What a spiritless carcass is the Religion of many Professors ? what's become of the soul of it ? Oh ! we freez in our duties, we freez in our devotions, we are almost frozen out of them all ; if we have a sacrifice left, what fire is there to offer it up ? *The God that answereth by fire, let him be God, said Elijah* ; the heart that asketh by fire, that ascendeth in fire, let that be the heart for God : *Behold the wood and the fire, but where is the Lamb for the Sacrifice* ? We may say, behold the wood and the Sacrifice, but where is the fire to offer it up ? our Spirits have taken a cold, the chill of them appears in all our duties : *Rabbi, where dwellest thou* ? Love, where dwellest thou ? Zeal of God, where is thy abode ? how many houses must we search ? how many hearts must we walk through, ere we find thine habitation ? The Apostle tells the Romans, Rom. 10. 2. *That they have a Zeal of God, but not according to knowledge* ; we have the knowledge of God, but oh ! where is the zeal ? *The zeal of thine house*, saith the Psalmist, *hath eaten me up* ; but is not that Eater eaten ? The house hath burnt up the fire, or if there be any fire left, it is a strange fire ? not the fire of love, but of lust, of pride, or covetousness, or that wild-fire of envy and contention that heats our spirits ? *Jehu was also on fire against the house of Ahab* ; *Come see my zeal for the Lord of Hosts*. That fire was fury, not love ; or if 'twas love, 'twas self-love ; not the love of God that made all that flame ; such hearts are like the evil tongue, James 3. *Set on fire of Hell*. Such heats are not from above, but are earthly, sensual, devilish ; we freez still, while we thus fry ; our prater-natural heats have extinguished the super-natural.

O! how little *kindly warmth* do we find in our spirits? do we feel our hearts working upwards, ascending in our flames? we all pretend to love, but consider, are our hearts making out in their strength after God? we wish well to his Name and Interest, we wish he were ours; we wish our selves his; O? if wishing were loving, what Christians should we be? But doth the Kingdome of God suffer violence? who are they that so run, as if they would take God by force, take Heaven by force? The Kingdome of Heaven may offer violence if it will, and take by us force; but how little violence doth it suffer? we say, we love God: but is there not some thing else we love more? we desire to be holy, but is there not something else we desire more?

O how few hearty friends hath Christ in the world? and how little love from these few: so little thai we cannot tell our selves whether it be any thing or nothing; how hard are we put to it? what a narrow search must we make? how many arguments must we consult? how many marks must we consider, e're we can prove we love him? and yet at last are still in doubt whether we love him or not.

When we love our carnall friends, our Wives, our Children, we can feel that we love them; when we love our Ease, or our Estates, or our Liberties, we can feel that we love them; but our God, we cannot tell whether we love him or no; How few of us can boldly make our Appeal to him, *Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.*

Oh how many wounds doth Christ receive in the house of his friends! how many slights must he put up? how often when he hath sate down in his own (in the highest) Room, have we said to him, *Give this man place? give this friend, or this business place, and so made him take the lower Room?*

How

How hath he, when he hath come to our doors, (his love hath often brought him thither) how often hath he both stood and knocked, and called ; *Open to me my Love, my Sister* ; and there been made to stand and wait, when strangers have been gotten in, and taken up all the rooms ? The world can never come out of season, but Christ is fain to wait his seasons, when he can find us at leisure ; if there be any other Guest with us, our Lord must wait ; *Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will send for thee* ; how often have we agreed and appointed to meet the Lord at such an hour in our Chamber, in our Closet, to have converse and communion with him in duty, and if any thing come in to carry us another way, then presently, *I pray thee have me excused* ; or, if we do keep our time, and shut in our selves with the Lord, and sit down to duty, what a multitude of thoughts presently fall a knocking at our doors ? and away our hearts go presently with them, to the ends of the earth, and leaves nothing but our carkasses behind with the Lord. O were our love stronger, our cries would be louder, and would drown the noise of these knockings, that they would not be heard or heeded, it would command silence to every impertinent thought. I charge you, O Daughters, that you stir not, that you disturb not my Beloved, and my Soul ; more love would command their attendance upon the work of the Lord, would gird up the loines of the mind, and gather in all its scattered Messengers : Come all ye powers of my Soul, come and do your homage, come and help in the service of God,

Oh ! at what distance are we content to live from the Lord, sometimes for many daies together ? Our souls and our God are grown strange, and yet we can be merry and quiet ; we can be without the presence of God, and yet never miss it ; not a smile from his face, nor a look of love from us to him, and yet no trouble follows :

follows : The Sun may be eclipsed, or under a Cloud, and yet no darkness upon our spirits ; we do not walk in darkness when we have no light ; sorrow and sadness is as far from us, as God is from us ; we can warm our selves at our own fires ; and rejoyce in the light of our own sparks, as if these were the Sun : We can do as well in a Mist, as in the Sun-shine ; day and night are both alike to us : The Children of the Bride-chamber do not fast, but can feast and make merry, when the Bride-groom is taken from them ; their carnal contentments they can make a shift with, to supply the room of their Lord. Can we not go sometimes where our Lord feeds, and never find him ? Go to pray, or go to hear, or go to a Sacrament, and the Lord never meet us there, and yet can return well enough satisfied ? when we thus want communion with God, and [can] want it ; where's our love ? what love is that which can so well bear the absence of her Beloved ? Call me no more *Naomi*, pleasant, but call me *Marah*, bitter ; *I went out full, but I return empty* : Full of grace, full of joy, because full of the Lord, but behold all is gone, my Husband is lost, my God is departed from me : Call me no more *Naomi*, but call me *Marah*, for the Almighty hath dealt bitterly with me, hath hid his face from me ; for these things I weep ; mine eyes, mine eyes run down with tears ; because the Comforter that should relieve my soul, as far from me ; such are the tears of Love for her absent Lord.

Oh how little Conscience is there made of bestowing that on the Lord, which we have bestowed on him ! we give and take ; we pretend to have given all to God, but are we not often taking away what we have given, and bestowing it elsewhere ? Love would have all we have running into God, and would have nothing run besides ; but oh what waste is there made of our time, of our parts, and other Talents, which were they well husband-
ed,

ed, would come to much, and be given to the Lord ; when so many days and hours run out, and no account taken of them, on what, or on whom they are consumed; when our eyes, and our ears, and hands, and tongues; which were made for God, the Devil and lust must so often have the using of them ; when back and belly, and friends and companions, must carry away what should be spent on God and souls ; when what should be allowed for Religion, and Charity to have the spending of, must be at the disposal of Pride, and Prodigality, and Gluttony ; when our prayers, our fasting, our preaching and hearing ; all our duties must become Sacrifices to our lust, our Idols are suffered to devour the sacrifices of the Lord ; When our pride and fleshly ends must have the offering, and eating of our sacrifices, this must make our prayers, and preach our Sermons, and keep our Fasts, and give our Alms, and wear the credit and honour of them as its own Crown ; When God is thus robbed, and we let the thief run away with all, and is never pursued or questioned, oh ! where is our love ?

Oh ! how little pleasure do we take in the Lord ? what a weariness is it to us, to wait upon him ? how glad are we when we come [back] from the house of the Lord ? when we come off our knees, come out of our Closets ; when the Sabbaths are gone, and the New-Moons are over, and we make our Returns from Heaven to earth ? how much work have we to keep our hearts by the Lord ; how do they sink away ere we are aware ? and whilst we are in his presence, how seldom do we rejoyce in his presence ; what hungry meals, what jejune feasts do we make before the Lord ? we relish not his dainties ? his Wine is but Lees, his Marrow and his fat things, are but leanness to our souls ; a little love would sweeten every drop, would season every morsel that comes from his Table, would make our very fasts to be pleasant bread : We feed upon the

Dish

Dish or the Trencher, and not the Meat; on the Bones, and not the Marrow; Ordinances, and the External Exercises of Religion, are but the bone, or the shell, or the dish, it is God that is the Kernel, the Marrow and Fatness. How little Communion have we with the Lord, in our approaches to him? and how little sweetness do we find in the little we have? Communion is the pleasure of Love, and Love is the sweetness of Communion. Now I am where I would be. O! how amiable are thy Tabernacles? Very pleasant art thou to me, O Lord; that is the voice of Love. Had we more love, we should be more spiritual; and spiritual things would be more grateful to spiritual hearts; Divine love is like the fire, it rarifies and changes hearts into it's own likeness, and then there's sweetness; O we are carnal, and that's enough to evidence, that there's little of the love of God abiding in us.

Consider these things, and you will see that love is a rarity, there's but little true love in the world. O prize the love of God, let its want make it prized; shall it be so rare, and yet so cheap? prize it, and press on after it.

What do these hearts below? are they not still below? so cold, such clods of clay, and yet above? so carnal, so sensual, and yet in Heaven? so hungry, and so greedy in sucking the juice of the Earth, in taking in its pleasures; so busie in digging out the wealth of the Earth, and searching for its treasures, [hearts] so busie this way, and yet not here? how canst thou say; I am walking with the God of Glory, when thou art still worshipping the gods of the Earth? How canst thou say, this heart is risen, it is not here; when it may be said to thee, *Behold the place where it lyes*; it is still in the Field, in the ridges and furrows thereof; it is still on the Mines, in the heart of the Earth, see the place where it lies. We sow our hearts with our seeds we

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send them down to digg in the heart of the Earth.

But what do these hearts below ? *Sursum corda*, get you up, get you up ; leave nothing but the Mantle here, your Carcasses, Earth to Earth, Dust to Dust. Come, heave these souls Heaven-ward ; let them take the wing and be gon : O that I had the wings of a Dove, that I might fly up, and be at rest ; be lower than ever by humility, but let love be on high.

Behold those *Cords of Love*, that are let down in every Ordinance ; in every Providence, there's a Cord let down to gather up hearts ? hearken to those *Calls of Love*, come up hither, come up hither ; we come Lord, thou bidst us come, O lend us thy hand, and lift us up.

Come on Christians, come let's be happy ; if we love, we are happy ; come let's rejoyce, if we love we joy ; come let's live ; we dye, we dye, while we linger on this earth ; if we love we live ; let's live, and let our life be love ; let our works be *labours of love*, our sufferings *seals of love*, our sorrows the *sorrows of love*, our wounds *love scars*, our prayers the *cries of love*, our praises *love-songs* to our Lord and God. Let every duty, every exercise, let every member, every power, let our bed es, let our souls be *love sacrifices* ; as we see in all his, so let the Lord see *Love* in all our wayes.

Canst thou not *Love* ? look till thou canst ; look up to thy God, send up thy thoughts thither ; let thy Meditations be of him ; these will not be long before the Throne ere they fetch up thy heart : Look on thy Jesus, Behold his hands and his feet, come and put thy finger into the print of the nails, and thrust thine heart into his side, and there let it lie till thou feel it warm, Look up to thy Jesus, lift up a prayer, Lord let me love thee, if thou lovest, let me love thee ; I will seek, till I can see, let me see, till I can love. What have I here Lord ? My All is with thee, my help, my hope, my treasure, my life is hid with Christ in God : And yet behold, this All is nothing to me,

me, while mine heart is no more with thee, take it Lord, take it up, where my Treasure is, there let mine heart be also.

Doubting Christian, who because thou lovest so little, fearest thou lovest not at all; cry for more, but be thankful for what thou hast; be *ashamed* thou lovest no more, but be not *dismayed*; thou complaineest thou canst not love God, but dost thou love his Image, his Saints, his Word, his Works, his Wayes? whilst thou sayest thou lovest not God, dost thou love Godliness? If thou canst not love, canst grieve, canst lament after him? Hast thou chosen, dost thou hang upon, trust in the Lord? If thou canst not love, canst fear and follow the Lord? If he be not sensibly in thy affection, is he in thy thoughts, in thy mouth, in thy eye? is he thy aim, and thy scope? Doth thy course bend towards him? Comfort thine heart in these things, thou maist see, though thou canst not feel thou lovest.

CHAP. XIV.

An Heart to fear the Lord.

AN heart to fear the Lord, *Jer. 32. 40. I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* I shall proceed to the opening of this by these steps; I shall shew; 1. that the Lord God is a dreadful God. 2. That the Lord hath put the dread of himself upon the hearts of all the earth. 3. That yet by sin the heart of man is much hardned from the fear of the Lord. 4. That God will recover his honour, and again put his fear into the hearts of his people. 5. What this fear of the Lord is, that he will put into them.

1. The Lord God is a dreadful God; he is dreadful in the excellency and Glory of his Majesty, *Job. 13. 11. Shall not his Excellency make you afraid, and his Dread*

fall upon you? His Power is dreadful. *Fear ye not me, saith the Lord? Will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the Sea, by a perpetual Decree, that it cannot passe it, and though the Waves thereof toss themselves, yet they cannot prevail; though they roar, yet can they not passe over it.* Fear ye not me, saith the Lord? He that did this, what can he not do? His wrath is a dread, *Jer. 10. 10. At his wrath the Earth shall tremble, and the Nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.* Yea, his Holiness, his truth, his Righteousness, and all his name, *Deut. 28. 58. That thou maist fear this glorious and fearful Name, [the Lord thy God]* The Lord God is a dreadful God.

2. The Lord God hath put the dread of himself upon the hearts of all the earth. Not the best only, but the worst of the sons of men. *I am a great King, saith the Lord, and my Name is dreadful among the heathen.* This dread of the Lord breaks forth upon them.

1. From the *Impress of God* upon the Natures of all men. As the Law, so the Being of God is written in their hearts, he hath his witness in their Consciences. If the Atheists of the Earth could answer all the Arguments from without, proving that there is a God; yet they can never confute their own consciences. If the Works of God do not, their Reins shall instruct them; if they will not see, whether they will or no, they shall feel that there is a God; and where-ever God is felt, he is feared; even when their mouth speaketh proud things, their heart shall meditate terror; and when nothing else is, they shall be terror to themselves.

2. It is encreased by the *great works of God*, his wonders that he doth in the World; his Thunder and his Hail, his Winde and his waves, his Earthquakes, make an Earth-quake in hearts.

3. It's further heightened, *by his Judgments* which he executeth on the Earth, The Judgements of God, are

are God revealing himself from Heaven, against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, and do then strike most terror, 1. When he smites *suddenly*, and makes quick work with sinners: as when *Herod* was smote by an angel of God, *Nadab* and *Abihu* consumed by fire from God, immediately upon their sin. *Sudden strokes* shake secure hearts. 2. When he executes *strange Judgements*, makes a new thing, as in the case of *Korah* and his company, he made the earth to open her mouth upon them, and swallow them up; so he made the flies, and the frogs, and the lice, &c. to be the executioners of his wrath on *Pharaoh*. 3. When he executes *great wrath for little sins*, as men account them; as in the case of *Uzzah*, whom he struck dead, for but touching the Ark when it shook. 4. When he exercises great *severity upon his own*, on those that are near him. If he spareth not his Sons, what will he do with his Enemies? *If these things be done on the green Trees, what shall be done on the dry?*

4. Yet further, By their *Conscience of guilt*, and their binding over their Judgment to come. *The sin of Judah is written with a Pen of Iron, with the point of a Diamond, it is graven upon the Tables of their heart.* The sin of *Judah* is written; yea, and the sin of the *Gentiles* also, *Rom. 2. 15. Their Conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing.* And where their sin is written, there their *Judgement* is written, which even nature it self will teach, doth inevitably follow upon sin; and this is the great dread that is upon them. The very mention of Judgment to come, made a *Felix* tremble at the face of a poor prisoner. This is the terror of the Lord, mentioned by the Apostle, *2 Cor. 5. 10, 11. We must all appear before the Judgment-seat—Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.* Death is said to be the *King of terrors*; and this is the terror of death, after that the Judgment.

All these, the impress of God upon their hearts, the Wonders of God in the World, the vengeance of God executed on sin, the sense of *Guilt*, and of a Judgment to come; do preach to the Consciences of sinners, that *it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

3. Yet by sin the heart of man is much *hardened from the fear of the Lord*. Sin blindes the eye, and hardens the heart, brings into danger, and puts out of fear. Who in such danger, and yet who so bold as the blind sinner? when the understanding is darkned, the next word we read is *Past feeling*, Eph. 4. 19. There is included in the very nature of sin, a sleighting of God; and by once sleighting, we learn to sleight him more. Slight the command, and you will quickly Sleight the Curse. Laugh at duty, and 'twill not be long ere you laugh at fear. And when *sin* hath thus hardened, God will also harden; lets the sinner alone, suspends his Judgment, smites the sinner with judicial blindness, and gives him up to a *Reprobate minde*, Rom. 1. 28. And when once they come to this, then hell is broke loose: For what Follows? ver. 29. *Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, and what not*, Psal. 36. 1. *The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, there is no fear of God before his eyes*, Gen. 20. When *Abraham* had such a thought *Surely the fear of God is not in this place*, what thought he was there then, Murther, Adultery, Rapes, all manner of Villany. *What sawest thou amongst us, that thou hast done this thing?* What hurt, what evil didst thou see amongst us? what evil? Evil enough to make me afraid: I thought the fear of God was not here, and there needs no more to make me afraid. Say of any person, *The fear God is not in this man*, and you therein say, *The Devil is in him*; here dwells sin, and all manner of wickedness.

Say of any place, *The fear of God is not in this place,* and if you finde it an *Egypt* or *Sodom* for abominations you will not wonder, *Psal. 19. 9. The fear of the Lord is clean*: that is not only *formaliter*, but *effective*, it cleanseth: where this is not, every unclean thing may dwell. The reason why this world is such a world as 'tis; such a wicked world such a treacherous, deceitful, ungodly world, why there is so little Faith or Truth, or Mercy, or Charity, or Sobriety, is, because there is so little of the fear of God. Sin hath cast out fear, and this hath brought forth sin in abundance. The Law is nothing; Threatnings are nothing. Conscience is nothing, God is nothing to men, because he is not their fear. Wickedness is as righteousness, villany as honesty, prodigality, debauchery, as temperance and sobriety; yea, and hath gotten the start of it: it faceth the Sun, it lifts up the head, it wears the Garland; it paints it self Vertue, Generosity, Gallantry, the Beauty and Ornament of the World, where the fear of God is departed.

God may promise, threaten, command, *Hearken to my voice, turn at my reproofs, cast away your transgressions*: Awake from your wine, be chaste, sober, be numble; let your merriment be turned into mourning, your jollity into heaviness. Remember your Creator, remember your souls, why will you dye? Turn and live: God may speak thus once, and twice, and ten times, but is not regarded; his words have no weight; his counsels have no credit, his warnings are of no value with hardened fearless hearts. If the Devil speak but once, he is heard; If Lust speak but once, 'tis obeyed; if a proud Companion speak but once, he is followed, whilst the Word of the God of Glory is made a reproach, and a scorn. O the intollerable contempt that's poured out upon the most High, by men that fear not God: Make thy Promises, and give thy gifts to whom thou wilt; give Grace, and give glory where thou pleasest; the world for

me ; my Pleasures, mine Honours, my liberty for me, this world for me, look after the other who will. Let the Lord threaten, let the day of the Lord come ; let it hasten, that we may see it ; let the Almighty do his worst, I will not hearken nor turn. This is the blasphemy of hardened, fearless hearts,

4. God will recover his Honour in the hearts of his people. He will put his fear in their hearts, whilst others are hardened, they shall tremble ; whilst others kick, they shall stoop ; whoever despise me, of these will I be had in honour.

5. What this fear of the Lord is, that he will put into their hearts. The fear of God is taken in Scripture,

1. Sometimes more *largely*, as it comprehends all Religion. *Job* was said, *Chap. 1.* to be a man fearing God ; that is, a godly man ; but in this sense I shall not here speak of it.

2. Sometimes more *strictly*, as a distinct grace, as distinguished from Faith, Love, Hope, and other graces of the spirit. And being taken in this sense, there are these two things included in it.

1. A Reverence of God.

2. An abhorrence of evil for Gods sake.

1. A Reverence of God. To fear God, is to have the awe of God abiding upon the heart, to be under a sense of the Majesty and Glory of the Lord, shining forth in all his Attributes, especially in his holiness and Omniscience ; the glory of his Holiness and the sense of such an holy eye upon the soul, strikes it with dread and consternation, This is expressed in Scripture, by *Sanctifying the Lord* in the heart, *Levit. 10. 3.* *I will be sanctified in them that draw nigh me,* *Isa. 8. 13.* *Sanctifie the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.* There is mentioned in Scripture of a *sanctifying of God*, and a *justifying of God*. As God doth justify and sanctifie his people, so they are to justify

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fie and sanctifie God. These two, the justifying and
 sanctifying of God, though they be much the same,
 yet there is some difference betwixt them : To sanctifie
 God, is to reverence him in our hearts, and to represent
 him in the Glory of his Holiness before men. To justifie
 God, supposeth a sinful judging, and foolish charging of
 God in the hearts of men, and is our vindicating of
 him from such charges. Is God righteous ? How is it
 then that he is so partial in his dealings with the righte-
 ous and unrighteous ? that he deals worse with those
 that fear him, than with those that fear him not ? Is God
 good ? How is it then that he is so hard, not only in im-
 posing, but inflicting such hard things upon his own ? Is
 God true ? How is it then that he fails his people so of-
 ten, when he hath said ; I will never fail them nor forsake
 them ? Our flesh hath failed, yea, and our hearts have failed,
 yea, and our God hath often failed us too ; we have often
 called, and have had no answer ; we have often trusted,
 and have had no deliverer. Yet God is righteous, yet
 God is good, yet God is true ; he hath not been unright-
 ous, he hath not been an hard Master, he hath not failed
 nor forsaken ; this is to justifie God.

Our justifying of God, hath some kindes of resem-
 blance with Gods justifying of us. Gods justification
 of us, stands in not imputing sin to us, and accepting
 us as righteous ; and our justifying of God, stands in our
 not imputing evil to him, and our acknowledging him to
 be true, just and good. God hath justified me from my
 sins, and that's enough to proclaim him good and faith-
 ful, whatever his other dealings be : Let him afflict me,
 let him chastize me, since he will not judge me, nor con-
 demn me with the World. God hath justified himself in
 my Conscience. I have found that the Lord is gracious,
 I have found that God is faithful ; he hath said he will
 not, and I must say, he hath not forsaken : He hath not
 failed, when he hath most failed me ; when he

hath.

hath been farthest off from my help, he hath even then been a present help in trouble : He hath answered, when he hath been most silent ; he hath been most good, when he hath been most hard. I have never found more sweet, than in his bitter Cup ? I must judge my self, not my God : I have sinned, I have sinned against him, and therefore I must justifie him when he speaketh, and clear him when he judgeth. Hold thy peace querulous heart, be silent all the Earth before the Lord, for *truly God is good to Israel, and to them that are of a cleane heart.* There be few among the worst of *sinners*, but if Conscience might be suffered to speak, it would justifie God. 'Tis lust that quarrels, not Conscience ; 'Tis vain to serve the Lord, and what profit is there to keep his Ordinances. His ways are unequal and hard, his promise fails, take one time with another, oftener than 'tis made good. Who is it that plagues and disappoints, and croseth and vexeth us ? This evil is of the Lord, why should I wait on the Lord any longer ? Nay, whom doth he punish more then those that are nearest him ? who have sorrow, who have trouble in the flesh, who are reproch'd, scorn'd, hunted up and down the World but these ? This they may thank God for, and their following of him. 'Tis better being the servant of sin, than the servant of Christ. Thus *Lust* blasphemes. But speak *Conscience*, Is God unrighteous ? Is God false of his word ? are the pleasures of sin better than the gain of godliness ? Have the children of this world made a wiser choice than the children of light ? Speak sinner, let thy Conscience speak whether it be thus or no. God hath not left himself without witness in the hearts of sinners, much more with his Saints, when they do speak their hearts, speak good of his Name. But this by the way.

To return to the matter in hand, To sanctifie God, is especially to reverence him in the heart ; to have such an
high

high, and holy, and honourable esteem of him, as commands an awe upon the heart ; and that,

1. At all times : *My son, be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.* [*My son*] 'Tis not only for slaves, but for sons to fear. [*Be thou in the fear of the Lord.*] 'Tis not only, Let the fear of the Lord be in thee, habitually in thy heart ; but actuat, and stirs up this holy fear, keep up an holy awe, a deep sence of God always upon thee ; let the fear of the Lord be before thine eyes, be possessed and swallowed up in this fear [*all the day long*] where ever thou art, with whomsoever thou hast to do, remember thou hast still to do with God. A Christian should stand always *pro tribunali* ; every day should be as the last day, the day of Judgment to him. *So speak ye, and so do, as those that shall be judged, Jam. 2. 12.* The judge stands at the dore, yea, and thou mayest see him through every window, yea, through every wall ; every wall is a window ; through which God may see, and be seen. A Christian (when he is as he should be) cannot wink God out of sight ; can look no where, but he sees that eye that strikes an awe upon his spirit.

This abiding reverence of God, what an influence will it have upon the whole course ? we shall then serve God *acceptably* ; when we fear, we shall please God : *That we may serve God (acceptably) with reverence and godly fear.* We shall then serve God *universally*, in every thing. When we fear, we shall watch unto every duty against every sin, *Gen. 42. 18. This do, and live, for I fear God* said Joseph to his brethren ; as if he should have said, Do not you fear to find falshood or any evil-dealing from me, for I fear God. I dare not be false to you, you may trust me, you may take my word, for I fear God. We shall then walk before the Lord *steadily*. When we fear, we shall fix, and hold in an even frame and course. Fear will be our ballast whilst Love fills our Sails, Fear will Balast our Vessel. How are slight
and

and frothy spirit, tossed up and down? Whither do they wander? How many hearts, and faces, and frames have they every day? What contradictions are they to themselves? The reverence of God upon them, would fix them, and hold them in a more even and equal poise. We should then serve the Lord more *honourably*. When we fear, we shall shew forth the virtues of God before the World; so much of the reverence, so much of the holiness of God upon us. The presence of a Christian walking in the fear of the Lord, is as the presence of God; the reverence of God upon his heart, casts a beam of Divine Majesty into his face, and often times begets an awe and reverence of him in the hearts of the worst offenders; they reverence, even whilst they revile and persecute him.

John Baptist, who was a man of a just, holy, and austere life; 'tis said of him, *Mark* 6. 20. That *Herod feared him, and observed him*. The austerity and holiness of his life, commanded a respect from an *Herod's* heart. Such Christians, their ways are a conviction, and their very countenances are a rebuke to the wanton world; they speak with authority, they exhort with authority, they reprove with authority, and sin often hides it self from them, even as from the face of God.

2. Especially in our drawing nigh to God, *Psal.* 89. 7. *God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the Saints, and so be had in reverence of all them that are about him. I will be sanctified in them that draw nigh me.* He that fears God, trembles at the word of God; and God loves he should, *Isa.* 26. 2. *To this man will I look—that trembles at my word.* That which makes him tremble, is, that he sees the Word carrying upon it,

The Holiness.

The Authority of God.

He reads the Word as the Epistle of God sent down to the world; his *Epistle Commendatory*; that sets forth the

the Excellency and the Glory of God, and his *Letters Mandatory*, that charge subjection and obedience upon him; he takes every Word as coming from the mouth of the holy one of *Israel*; he lies prostrate before the Lord; his soul bows the knee, his heart falls down at the feet of the Almighty. The Word, by how much the more it's considered as the word of God, by so much the more awe it works upon him. Every look he casts upon his Bible, is a looking into Heaven. He that feares God, feares when he comes to worship, reverences his Sanctuary: *In thy fear will I worship, Psal. 5.7.* That which works this fear, is, that he looks upon the Duties and Ordinances of Worship, as

The Institutions of God.

His Application unto God.

This is that which the Lord hath sanctified; behold his Image and superscription; here he hath appointed me to wait for him; here he hath appointed to meet my soul; now I am going up to the Mount of God (the Mount of God is every where, where the Worship of God is.) My soul, where art thou? *I am before the Lord of the whole Earth. Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, the place whereon thou standst is holy Ground. I am before the High and Holy One, the God of all the Earth; and upon transactions of Eternal consequence, to do my Homage to the everlasting King, to kneel before the Lord my Maker, to kiss the Golden Scepter, to beg my Life at his hands, to behold his going in his Sanctuary, his Wisdom, and his Mercy, and his goodness are all passing before me. How dreadful is this place? This is none other but the House of God, and the Gate of Heaven, Gen. 28.17. How dreadful is this Word? This is none other but the Word of God. How dreadful is this Ordinance? This is none other but the door of glory. Tremble thou heart at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob.*

2. *Abhorrence of evil* for the Lords sake. Here we shall consider

Its Object.

Its Ground.

1. *The Object of this Abhorrence* in general, is evil; *Rom. 12. 9. Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good.* Good is the Object of Love, Evil of Fear. Evil is two fold, Present or to come. The former is the Object of Grief, the latter of Fear. Particularly, the Object of this abhorrence is

The wrong of God;

The loss of God.

1. *The wrong of God.* The great and only wrong of God, is sin. Sin is the *turning away* of the heart from God. The great thing in all the World which God respects, and requires as his own, is *Hearts*. *My son, give me thine heart. Keep thine heart with all diligence, Prov. 4. 23.* Keep thine heart, that is, keep it for me; keep it clean for God, and keep it safe for God; see that it be not defiled and carried away. When the heart's gone, all's gone with it. If the world hath gotten hearts, if Satan hath gotten hearts, let them take all, saith God; let me have either a heart, or nothing; and all they are like to have, that have the heart. The heart, where ever it goes, carries all with it. Where we bestow our hearts, we bestow all that we have. Sin is the *turning away* of the heart. This is the very nature of sin, The hearts departing from the living God, *Heb. 3. 12.* And therefore this is the great wrong of God. There is but one thing in the World that God respects, and this sin steals away.

Sin is the *insurrection* and rebellion of the heart against God;

God; it turns from him, and turns against him; it runs over to the Camp of the Enemy, and there takes up arms against God. Sin is a turning from God, and a fighting against God, it would spoil the Lord of all the Jewels of his Crown, It opposeth the *Sovereignty* of God. A sinful heart would set up it self in Gods Throne, it would be King in his stead, and have the command of all. Sinners would be their own Gods; *Our tongues are our own, who is Lord over us?* God shall not be God, where sin is gotten up as Lord. It assaulteth the *wisdom* of God. Vain man would be Wise, wiser than his Maker, It charges the Lord with Folly, and proclaims it self the only Wise. Sinners pretend to know how to chuse for themselves, and order themselves to their advantage, better than God. If God would let me alone to my self, to be at my own finding, at mine own ordering it should quickly be better with me. If every thing might be with me, as I would have it, my case would be well mended from what 'tis now, that every thing must go as God will have it. All our quarrellings at Providence, all our murmurings and discontents at our Lot, are our hearts charging the Lord with folly. It casts dirt on the *holiness* of God, it disparages the *goodness* of God; it abuseth *mercy*, violates his Justice, despises his Power. In sum, it disgraceth the Throne of his glory, and layes his honour in the dust; sets the Almighty below the lowest of his creatures.

Every companion shall be respected more than God; every pleasure shall be loved more than God; the Devil shall be feared more than God. Where is his love? where is his fear? where is his honour? Nay, where were the Lord, might sin carry it? Sin is the wrong of God, and this wrong is the especial Object of this abhorrence. A gracious heart would do no wrong, he would not wrong his Neighbour, he would not wrong his Servant, his Enemy, no nor his Beast that he possesses. But

oh! should I wrong my God? Hath he ever done me any wrong? Hath he not been just to me? Yea, hath he not been ever good to me? Kind, pitiful, patient, bountiful? who hath fed me, clothed me, kept me, succoured me, comforted me? What friend have I in all the World? What Father, what Portion, what Hope, but the Lord? what were I, what had I, but vanity, but woe and misery, had I not a God? I cannot wrong my God, but I wrong myself, *Prov. 8. 36. He that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul.* But if I did not, if my Arrows would not recoil, could I go out with all this injury, and suffer nothing by it: Yet he is God whom I wrong; he is holy, he is righteous, he is good, he is glorious, he is excellent; he only is God, and shall I be injurious to him? He is worthy, he is worthy of all that I have, of all the service I can do, of all the respect I can give, of all the praise I can offer up; if I had a thousand tongues, if I had a thousand hands, if I had a thousand lives, if I had a thousand souls, if I had all the Earth for an offering to the Lord, all would be nothing to shew forth the praise that is due unto his Name, as he is God, and I his creature: and when I owe so much, and have nothing to pay, shall I steal from him? shall I rise up against him? *Wast thou not afraid to lift up thy hand against the Lords Anointed? 2 Sam. 1.* Shall I not be afraid to lift up mine hand against the Lord himself? to kick against God? Oh the Lord forbid? What art thou O my soul? what servest thou for? if thou canst not tremble, if thou dost not turn within me, if thou dost not start back at the very thought of so great wickedness.

2. *The loss of God.* As was said before, *he that sinneth against God, wrongeth his own soul.* His loss is thy loss, and more thine than his; though (no thanks to thee) the Lord will be no loser at last; when sinners have done their worst, he can get up his Honour out of Dishonour;

he can recover his spoils out of the ashes; if he had lost all the world, he had lost nothing, he is all things in himself. When Earth and Hell have spent all their malice, God will be God, holy, wise, glorious, blessed for ever. Though such be the malignity of sin, that it would not give over, till God ceaseth to be God, yet God is above, too high for sin to reach; its Darts fall short of its mark; God cannot, God will not sit down a loser by all that sin can do.

But what dost thou suffer, what dost thou lose that sinnest against God? The carnal world understand not what, nor would make such reckoning of it, did they understand it. The loss of two pence goes often nearer them than the loss of God. But now a Christian knows no other fear, fears no others loss; let God be secure, and all is well. Sin will be the wrong of God, and the loss of God; it may be a total and eternal loss for ought he knows, at least if not assured; God lost, is the soul lost, the Kingdome lost; this is hell, the loss of God. Better have no being; better be a Dog, or Toad, than a man without a God; or if he be not utterly lost, yet to his present sense, 'twill be all one as if he had no God; his peace is lost, his comfort is lost, and his soul is often given for lost, from whom God is departed, though but for a season; he can take pleasure in nothing, he can find rest no where, whose God is out of sight. He knows not what a God means, who can spare him till Death or Judgment. A Christian cannot live a day without him; 'tis night, 'tis all dark, he knows no day while the Sun is set upon him. How grievous do they find this loss, who have proved what it is? *What wilt thou do for me, whilst I go childless? What can be done for me, whilst I go fatherless? here is my house, here are my friends, and my lands, but where is my God? My God my God why hast thou forsaken me?* Now I see what this earth is without an heaven; now I see what ease, pleasure, & signal friends

are, and how little they can do for me ; yea, what is prayer ? what are Sabbaths ? what are Sermons, Sacraments, Promises whilst God looks not down ? Oh I was wont to meet with God here ! these glasses were my windows i to Heaven ; and then how pleasant were they to me ? Sabbaths were a delight, the Word was a Treasure, Sacraments were the Clusters of *Canaan*. But now, now all's dark and dry ; Ordinances are *Wells without water* ; Promises are *Breasts with Milk* ; Ministers are *Stars without Light* ; Oh the Stars are but Clods, whilst the Sun is a Cloud to me ; wo is me ; *I had a God*.

I am pained, I am pained, my head is sick, my heart is faint, my bowels are turned, my liver is poured out, the light of mine eyes is gone from me. I am weary of my groaning, I am full of tossings and turnings, there is no soundness in my flesh, no rest in my bones, while my soul sayes daily to me, *Where is thy God* ? And if the sense of this loss worketh such grief, what wonder if the hazard of it worketh fear ? Now sin divides, breaks the peace, makes God and the soul two ; sin alienates, breeds a distance and estrangement betwixt God and the soul. That soul can either not see him at all, or not as a friend, whom sin hath drawn away. Sin will either cloud the face of God, or cloath him with fury, will cause him either to turn his back upon the soul, or set his face against it. He that knows what 'tis to enjoy God, will dread his loss ; he that hath seen his face, will fear to see his back ; he loves, he therefore would not lose.

7. The ground and reason of this abhorrence, that is two-fold.

God's Jealousie.

His Peoples Ingenuity.

1. *Gods Jealousie*. The Lord thy God is a Jealous God, Exod. 20. The same Arguments which the Lord useth to keep up, and enforce his Authority upon the Consciences of his people, the same Arguments they do, and

and ought to make use of, to press it upon themselves. I am a jealous God, saith the Lord; 'tis true, saith Conscience, the Lord is Jealous; and therefore take heed to thy self, soul, how thou fallest into his hands. *Its a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

The Jealousie of the Lord includes in it, His
Tenderness of his Honour.

Terribleness in case of Dishonour.

1. *His tenderness of his Honour.* The Honour of God is very tender to him, he will not lose a tittle of it, *Jer.* 48. 8. *My Glory will I not give to another, nor my praise to Graven Images.* I will not, and look you to it, that you do not give away my glory. What was the reason that God dealt so severely with *Eli* and with *Herod*? What was *Eli's* sin? why, that he gave away the Honour of God to his Sons, *1 Sam.* 2. 29. *Thou honourest thy Sons above me.* He was so tender to his Sons, that though they were become Sons of *Belial*, and dealt so wickedly before the Lord, yet they must be dealt gently with; *Nay, my Sons, it is no good thing that I hear of you.* Such a slight reproof must serve in so dreadful a case; he was afraid to displease his Sons by a sharper reproof; this the Lord interprets an honouring of his Sons above him. Indulgent Parents, stand and tremble, you that can see your Children sin, and let them go out with a *Nay my Sons*; it is not good, a slight or cold reproof, this is no other but your honouring your sons above your God. What was *Herods* sin? *Acts* 12. 22, 23. that he gave not God the glory. He made an Eloquent Oration, and the people thereupon made him a God: *The voice of God, and not of man*, and he accepted of the applause; and thereupon the Angel of the Lord smote him, that he died. *Eli* sinned in giving the honour of God to his Sons; and *Herod* in taking it to himself; but God taught them both, how dear his glory is to him.

2. *His terribleness in case of his Dishonour.* The mentioned instances speak him both tender and terrible, Deut. 4. 24. *The Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a Jealous God.* The jealousy of a man, is the rage of a man, Prov. 6. 34. And the jealousy of God is the rage and fury of a God. *Our God is a consuming fire*; that's the fire of his Jealousie. The wrath of a King is as the roaring of a Lyon; when the Lyon roareth, the beasts of the field tremble; what then are the terrors of the Lord? The threatnings of the Lord are terrible, Psalm 50. 20. *Consider this, ye that forget God, lest he [tear you in pieces] and there be none to deliver.* Hos. 5. 14. *I, even I, will tear and go away.* Tearing and tearing in pieces, the very expectation of it is enough to tear the heart in pieces. I will tear them, saith God; I my self will do it, (I even I) will tear. It's terrible to be torn of men or of wild beasts; but take heed of Gods tearing. I will tear (in pieces.) I will not tear off their hair, or their garments, or their ornaments; I'll tear their flesh from their bones, limb from limb; yea, soul from body; I'll tear you in pieces. I will tear them (and go away,) tear them, and leave them; wound, and not heal; I will tear them, and deliver them who can; yea, I will tear them, and trample upon them, Isa. 63. 3. *I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury.* Trampling notes contempt and indignation. *I will make them as the dirt in the streets*; the mark of my scorn and fury.

His *Judgments are terrible*, he doth terrible things in righteousness. Go to *Jerusalem* and Mount *Sion*, and behold the Monuments of his fury there. Go to *Shiloh* (saith God) and see what I did to it, Jer. 7. 12. But if you go down to *Sodom*, or look down to *Tophet*, and behold the terrors of the Lord there; or if you look on particular persons, let *Nadab* and *Abihu*, *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, *Uzzah*, *Uzziah*, *Ananias* and *Sapphira*,

phira, Herod. &c. be for instances of his dreadfulnes and severity. This jealous God, this terrible God, is the God that his people fear; and they therefore fear him, because he is such a jealous God. *Who would not fear thee, thou King of Nations? Who can stand before thee when thou art angry? My flesh trembles for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy Judgements.*

Christians, Let none say, this fear is not the fear of his Children; this be to his Enemies and Slaves, not his Children: Fear ye not their fear. But are not all these things written for our learning? Is this written only for their sakes? Or saith he not also for our sakes? For our sakes no doubt this is written, saith the Apostle in another case. Consider that full Scripture to this purpose, *1 Cor. 10. 6. to the end of ver. 12. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted; neither be ye Idolaters as were some of them, as it is written; The people sate down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand: Neither let us tempe Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of Serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the Destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*

Mark. these things are our examples. Are they examples to us, and not warnings too? Are they warnings to us, and must we not by them learn to fear and beware? Let him that thinks he standeth, take heed lest he fall. My Soul standeth in a sure place, my Mountaine is so strong, that I shall never be moved, I am safe enough; I am in Christ, and shall not come into condemnation. But what ever thou thinkest, as sure is

thou thinkest thou standest, take heed, take heed lest thou fall; that is, not only into the same sins, but into the same condemnation; that's the sense of the place. *Rom. 11. 20. Because of unbelief they were broken off; thou standest by faith. Be not high minded, but fear.*

No need of fear? No need of threatnings? what may we burn half our Bibles? Can we spare so great a part of what is written? Have we out-grown the use of Judgment, as soon as ever we are partakers of Mercy? Have we out-grown the use of the scourge, as soon as ever we are entred into Christs School? Do we find all too little, Mercies, Threatnings, Judgments, to keep our hearts in order? and yet is it more than needs? There are two Parties in us, we are flesh as well as spirit, and must not the flesh be frightened? will love prevail with lust? This slave sure, this son of the bond-woman, must be kept in awe. Hath God no wanton Children, no rebellious Children? and must these have no other discipline, but strokings and dandlings?

Believe it Christians, God will not have his terrors lost, nor lost to you; God will sometimes make his Children feel that he is a terrible God. He is *terrible out of his holy place*. Beware you be not presumptuous Children. There is a threefold presumption. A presumption upon temptation, in confidence of strength. Upon sin, in confidence of Mercy. Upon sin, in contempt of Mercy and Justice.

1. *A Presumption upon Temptation, in confidence of strength.* Some unwary souls, not knowing what spirits they are of, supposing themselves too hard for the Devil, will be venturing within his reach; as if they would dare him to try his skill and power; who having forgotten this prayer, [*Lead us not into temptation*] put themselves into the Tempters hand; the falls of such will teach them to understand their folly.

2. *Presumption on sin, in confidence of Mercy.* And that either in confidence of Mercy already obtained, I am in Christ, and my sin shall not separate me from him; whatever I do, I have a pardon in my hand : or in *hope of mercy at last* ; I have to do with a merciful God, and therefore may venture on a little farther : hereafter I will repent, and then I need not doubt of remission,

3. *Presumption on sin, in contempt of Mercy and Justice.* I will have my sin, though I never find mercy. I will have my will and my way, and run the hazard of what follows : I will take my course, and come on me what will.

This last sort, who presume to sin in contempt of Mercy and Judgment ; who are so drunken with their sensual delights, and given over to the hardness of their hearts, that they neither value Mercy, nor fear wrath : *What do you talk to me of Mercy and Judgment to come ? Give me my pleasures, and my liberties, and my mirth, and my money : Think not to make me such a fool, to let go the pleasure and comfort of my life, for I know not what uncertain fears or hopes.* Such as these have one foot already in hell. If it be not yet thus with thee, thou dar'st not condemn either Mercy or Judgment ; beware thou be not presumptuous neither in the former sense. Be not bold upon temptations ; think not that thou art strong to overcome a temptation, when thou art so weak as not to fear it ; he that fears not a temptation, understands not it, or himself : but especially beware thou presume not upon sin, in confidence of Mercy. Grow not over-bold upon love or patience ; *Leva patientia fit furor.* God loves me, therefore I may be bold to take the more liberty, the less care, the less watchfulness ; the less fear, because so much love ! Spit in thy Fathers face, because he weeps over thy neck ! Smite him on the face, because thou hopest he will not strike again ! Tear his bowels, because they are so tender towards thee !

thee ! Be froward, stubborn, wanton and Idle, because thou hast found him so indulgent.

Christians consider, whether such wickedness hath not sometimes been found in some of our hearts. But take heed you will find, though he be a tender, yet he will not be a fond Father ; where he loves, he will be feared. Some as bold and as confiden as you, have felt to their cost, what 'tis to abuse patience and kindness ; his arrows in their hearts, his terrors in their souls, hath made them to know that *the God of Love is a terrible God*. And look to it, if thou yet wilt adventure, wilt be a wanton still, froward, or idle, or heedless still, he will either lash thee into better manners or cast thee out as no childe of his, but a Bastard and Rebel. If thou wilt not take warning by others, take heed lest he make thee a warning to them which shall come after.

Christians know, that though God be tender of his Saints, yet he is jealous for his Name ; he tenders them as the Apple of his Eye, but not above the least tittle of his honour. As God will have us love our neighbour, so he will love his Childe, but *as himself*: First himself, and then his Childe. He will not bate an *Idol* of his glory to save a world. As little offences done to his little ones, so little sins allowed by them, are as *Milstones about the neck*. If they allow it in themselves, yet heaven and earth shall pass away, and fall to nothing, ere he allow it in them. God will not, and therefore his Children dare not indulge themselves in little sins. They therefore fear, because he whom they serve is a jealous God.

2. *Their own ingenuity*. This fear is from Love and good Nature, and is most properly the fear of Children. Children fear, because God is jealous, and so do Slaves ; but only Children because God is good. Children fear, because they love ; Slaves fear although they hate. Children fear to be *unworthy*, Slaves only to be unhappy and miserable. There's nothing more contrary to an ingenu-

ous nature, than to abuse goodness and kindness, to abuse goodness, hath as black an aspect with him, as to provoke wrath. *Hos. 3. 5. They shall fear the Lord and his [goodness] in the latter dayes.* But how can goodness be the Object of fear? we fear evil, and not good. The meaning is, they shall fear to wrong or abuse goodness. They shall fear to wrong the Lord, because he is good. [In the latter dayes.] These latter dayes that this Promiser refers to, shall be dayes of more grace; wherein there shall be, not only a more *clear revelation* of the goodness of God; they shall *know* the Lord and his Goodness; but a more *plentiful communication* and diffusion of the goodness of God; they shall *love* the Lord and his goodness: They shall *see* themselves both *more obliged* by goodness, & shall feel themselves *more seasoned* with goodness. By Grace they shall be better natured. Religion doth not make *more* *free*, but *more generous, free, and ingenious*. There is nothing *more* abhorrent to an ingenuous spirit, then to be base and unworthy. Abuse of goodness is an unworthiness, which an ingenuous nature abhors as death to be guilty of; 'tis its destruction, 'tis dis-ingenuity. The abuse of the goodness of God, is great unthankfulness; and unthankfulness is great dis-ingenuity.

Ingratum si dixeris omnia dixeris. Call me unthankful, and you call me all that's naught. Call me any thing else but unthankful. Indeed, were I all thanks, I should still be unthankful; I should still be behind-hand with the goodness of the Lord; my debt is greater than I can pay, yea, greater than I can acknowledge; but shall I return evil for his good? If I cannot pay, should I deny my debt? He that is unthankful, what ever God requires of him, says wickedly, *This is more than I owe thee. God I owe thee nothing, I care not for thee.* Oh this is dreadful to a gracious heart.

If this be in sin (for all sin is unthankfulness) if this be sin, if this be the signification of all my neglects of God, and my duty to him; then the Lord forbid, what ever I suffer, that I should yield to sin. How shall I do this wickedness? How shall I neglect this duty, and sin against God? How shall I look my God, or my own soul in the face, should I be so unworthy? For thy sake, Lord, let me not sin against thee; thou art good, thou art kind, thou art gracious, thou art holy; O let me not be a Devil; what heart, where a Devil is not, but such goodness will charm it into love? shall I sin? shall I rebel? For thy sake, Lord, I will not do it; I will not for *mine own sake*; for where then shall I appear? In sinning against God, I sin against my own soul; I dare not for my life; Sin and Death, Sin and Hell are link'd together; but were it not so, might I sin and escape, sin and not dye, yet for thy sake, Lord, I will not do it: Thou art Good, Good in thy self, Good to me: thou art my God, thou art my Father; love, care, tenderness, compassion, kindness, is all that is in thine heart towards me; what I am, what I have, what I hope for, that I breath, that I live, all is thy goodness, thy bounty to me: Oh let me not rise up against the Womb that bare me, and the Paps that gave me suck. I would not to my child, to my servant, to my friend, but oh let me never to my Father, to my God, *return evil for good, and hatred for his good will*. Let not this evil which I fear, ever come upon me; put thy fear into mine heart, O Lord, that I may not sin against thee.

CHAP. XV.

Obedience in the Covenant.

7. **O**bedience, Ezek. 36. 27. *I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes; and*

and ye shall keep my Judgments, and do them. Obedience is of the Heart, or of the Life. In this Scripture, God undertakes for both.

1. For the obedience of the Heart, he undertakes in the former words, [*I will put my Spirit in your heart,*] where the Spirit dwells, he rules. Where Satan dwells, he rules ; and where the Spirit of the Lord dwells, there God rules ; the Spirit in the heart, is the Law of the heart. Those two Promises, *I will put my Spirit into your hearts,* and *I will write my Law in your hearts,* signify the same thing. The Law in the heart, is the will of man melted into the will of God. The Law of God may be in the mouth, and the heart a rebel ; its reception into the heart, notes the hearts subjection to it.

The obedience of the heart includes two things :

1. The opening the heart to the Word.
2. The resolution of the heart for the Work of the Lord.

1. *The opening of the heart to the Word.* What wilt thou have me to do, Lord : That's the voice of an obedient heart. *Veniat verbum & submittimus.* Speak Lord, command Lord, what wilt thou ? And when he speaks, whatever it be, the word is imbraced and accepted of the heart. *Dan. 4. 27. Let my counsel be acceptable to thee.* The acceptance of the Word in the heart, is signified by its *hearkning* to it. To hearken, is more then to hear ; though they sometimes note the same thing, yet ordinarily, hearing is of the ear, hearkening of the heart, *Psal. 81. 11. Israel would not hearken, my people would none of me.* They heard what the Lord spake, but they would not *hearken*, that is, as 'tis there interpreted, they would none of the Lord. They rejected the Word of the Lord which he spake unto them. When the Word is let come in with Authority, suffered to rule in the soul ; when the heart gives up it self unto it, then it is accepted, there's its hearkening to it.

The resolution of the heart for the work of the Lord. Psal. 119. 106. I have sworn and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments. I have vowed, and I will perform; I have covenanted, and I am determined to keep thy statutes, The word which thou hast spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not do; that's the rebellious, Whatsoever the Lord shall speak we will do; that's the obedient heart.

Where the heart is thus resolved to obey, this is that obedience which shall be accepted unto salvation. Where this resolution is, as there is opportunity, there will be practice; and where there's not opportunity in Gods account, this is it. This is Praying, this is Hearing, this is giving, and feeding, and cloathing and visiting; this is walking circumspectly, working righteousness, shewing mercy, exercising faith, and patience, and repentance; this is our keeping the Commandments of God, and walking in his Statutes; an heart to obey, is our obeying; an heart to do, is our doing; an heart to suffer in Gods account, is our suffering for his Name.

But here it must be carefully noted, that though sincere resolution for Obedience, be Obedience; yet every resolution is not *that* resolution. Resolution for Obedience is then sincere, where

1. It flows from an inward and rooted inclination.
2. It's bottomed on a firm belief of Scripture Revelation.
3. It's built on the highest and weightiest Reasons.
4. It's the result of the most mature and deep deliberation.

1. *A sincere resolution flows from an inward rooted inclination, Psal. 119. 112. I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes. Our new purpose is from*
our

our new nature : It is not produced by some sudden fright, or sense of danger ; or merely by present force of Argument : but by a Divine power, working the heart to a suitableness to the will and wayes of God, and an habitual propension and inclination thereto. Resolution for holiness, without any holy inclination, is a blade without a root ; as fresh and as green as it looks, 'twill wither and come to nothing ; no Root, no Fruit, nor lasting. The heart is the root of action, and Grace is the life of the root : When our Resolutions are the blade, sprouting forth of this living Root, then they will abide, and bring forth the Ear and an Harvest.

2. *A sincere resolution is bottomed on a firm Assent, to the truth of Scripture Revelation.* A Christian resolves for godliness, because he believes God, that he is as he hath said, *the Rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* He is built on the Scriptures ; as his hopes, so his purposes have the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, on which they stand. Whatever Resolution hath not this Foundation, is but as an house upon the Sands.

3. *A sincere Resolution is founded on the highest Reason:* Where we resolve without Reason, we will quickly find a Reason to change. Where we resolve we know not why, we shall change we know not how soon. To resolve we know not why, and to resolve on we know not what, will be alike unstable. Though there be Reason for Religion, yet Religion may be taken up without Reason. What ever Reason there be for it, yet if it be not understood, or considered, 'tis all one as if there were no reason at all. And if there seem some Reason for it, yet if it be not the highest Reason, when a stronger than it comes, we quickly change our purpose.

The Reasons we have for our serving and following God, are the highest of all Reasons, and that whether we respect it as our duty ; or our happiness. For,

1. *There's none can lay such claim to us as God, Whose*
am

am I? Who hath made me? Who hath bought me, 1 Cor. 6. 20. *Glorifie God in your bodies, and in your spirits, which are his*, Psal. 100. 2, 3. *Serve the Lord with gladness, for the Lord he is God, it is he that hath made us, not we our selves; we are his people, and the sheep of his Pasture.* What reason have you to serve men, or to serve sin, or the world? Men think they have reason for it, but what reason? Are any of these Gods? Are men your Gods? is sin or the world God? do you owe your selves to them? *It is he that hath made us, and his we are.* As the Apostle concerning obedience to Parents, much more may it be said here, Children obey your God, for this is right: This is his due, and your duty; if any one can lay as good a claim to you, let him carry you away for servants.

2. *There's none can be better to us than God.* None can requite, none can reward our obedience as he. Where can you be better than with God? He'll require no more, than that you serve him till you can find a better Master. He that saith, 'tis best to serve sin and the world, is a fool, and hath said in his heart, *there is no God.* If God be God, he is the chief, yea, the only good. If any thing in the world, upon what account soever, be thought better than the Lord, that's set up for a God in his room.

3 *Whomsoever we serve, 'tis God must pay us our wages at last.* God is Judge, he is the rewarder both of the evil and the good; both of those that serve him, and those that serv: him not. If you serve the Lord, he will be your reward; if you serve him not, he will reward you: but what reward have you? *Those mine Enemies which will not have me reign over them, bring them, and slay them before me;* there's their reward. Sin hath its rewards, but what are they but vanity and vexation? Or if they were better, how long will they last? But when sin hath paid the most it can, O what a reward is there behind, that God hath to pay you! *This shall ye have*

have of mine hand, ye shall lye down in sorrow.

4. *The wages which God will give, shall certainly be blessed or dreadful, according to our Obedience or Disobedience.* The reward that God hath to give, is an eternal reward: Eternal salvation to them that obey him; everlasting destruction to him that serveth him not.

I have a soul, this carcass is the least part of me, there's another world, a world to come; a few years is the most I have to spend in this; I must abide eternally, eternally in the other world.

How inconsiderable is it, what have I here, whether little or more, better or worse; in a short time that will come all to one. But oh my Eternity! what's that like to be? why 'tis God that must determine it, and he will certainly reward every man according to his works, *Rom. 2.6,7,8,9,10 Who will render to every man according to his deeds. To them which by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, honour and immortality, eternal life. But to them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, tribulation and anguish, &c.* There's glory and shame, mercy and wrath, life and death set before me; there's no third state, one of the two must be my Lot; and this is that doth determine which, *If I obey, I live; if I disobey I dye for ever.*

Now when my resolution is founded on such reasons as these, than which none can be imagined higher and more weighty; (till Eternity become of less regard than time; and an immortal soul beset below a perishing body) and when the question being put; *shall I follow God or not? God or the World? God or my Lust? Speak Soul, give in thy answer;* when this is the answer it gives, Why there's none can lay such claim to me as God; there's none can be as good to me as God; whomsoever I serve, its God must be my Rewarder, my everlasting blessedness, or eternal ruine depends on him, and must be infallibly determined, according to my obedience

ence or disobedience : This is the plain case, Obey and Live ; Obey or dye for ever. And therefore what can I say less or more, but *I am the Lords, and will be his Servant.* Let others chuse whom they will serve, as for me, O my Soul, serve thou the Lord. This resolution thus founded, is like to stand.

4. *A sincere resolution, is the fruit of mature deliberation.* Deliberation gives Reason its full weight, makes the strength of it appear ; it layes all things in the Balance ; it's the comparing of Reasons for, and against, the weighing of Arguments; and Objections, Encouragements and Discouragements ; casting the cost; as well as the gain. Particularly, In this deliberation there must be a considering,

1. What there is in this Obedience.

2. What it is attended with that may encourage.

1. *There must be a considering, what there is in this Obedience ;* or otherwise we resolve upon we know not what. Now there are five things in this Obedience :

Subjection.

Activity and Industry.

Integrity.

Circumspection.

Spirituality.

1. *Subjection.* Servants must be subject, must not be at their own wills, but at the will of another : The heart of man naturally affects Dominion, that's the great controversy of sinners with God, *Who shall be Lord ? We are Lords, (we would be at least) we will come no more unto thee,* Jer. 2. 31. Obedience yeilds that God should be Lord ; yea, and all others also whom he hath made Lords over us. The servants of Christ must not be, and yet must be the servants of men ; they must not serve the lusts, but must be subject to their righteous Laws and Commands. God must be obeyed, and Magistrates, Ministers, Masters, Parents must be in the Lord, and for the

the Lord ; yea, and they must be, when God will have it so, the servant of servants.

While they must not serve the humors of the greatest, they must serve the necessities of the meanest, must stoop to the lowest of Offices, even to the washing of the feet of the least Disciple : All this the Lord expects of them; and they must be subject. They must not dispute, but do his will ; only it must be considered, that there is a double disputing the will of God. There is a disputing whether that which is pretended to be the will of God, be so or no; this ought to be done : And there is a disputing or questioning that which is granted to be the will of God, whether it be fit to be done, or safe to be done? Is it not better to let it alone? what advantage is there in it? What reason is there for it? No, they must not thus dispute ; this is reason enough, God will have it so. Gods will is ever reason, and it must be our reason. It's enough for thee to say, *This is that which the Lord hath commanded*, and must I be subject? This is one thing that must be considered, I will obey, but can I be subject?

2. *Activity and Industry.* The servants of the Lord must be Active and Industrious. Whom he sends into the Vineyard, he sends to work, and not to sleep. The life of a Christian is laborious ; whilst others are in their beds, he must be on his knees ; whilst others take their pleasure, he must take pains ; whilst others take their times, now a little, and then a little, he must sit to it, be ever about his Masters business. An Active spirit, is an excellent spirit, and 'tis necessary in a Christian.

1. An Active spirit, is an excellent spirit : sluggards are the refuse of the earth.

But here it must be considered, that there is a double Activity, Gracious and Natural.

1. *Natural*, which arises from an innate vigorous and vivacity of some mens spirits : There needs no industry

industry in such, to bring forth action: 'tis but leaving nature to its course, and that will flye high enough of it self. It requires more industry to regulate, and sometimes to restrain, than to put forth into action. Its more labour for them to rest, than to be doing.

2. *Gratiom* : Which is either Natural Activity, managed and improved for God, turn'd into a right course, running in a right Channel; or a natural unactive spirit, raised and quickned by grace and religious industry. This gracious, this holy Activity, this is the Excellency; it is the extract of the spirits and life of all our parts and graces, and will go further, and do more high honour, and more abundant service to God and his Gospel, than is done by a thousand others.

An Active sinner, is by accident the worst of men: How much service for the Devil will he dispatch in a little time?

An Active sinner is *life and death met together*. He is all life, and yet dead; and the more he hath of death, because so much of life; like poyson in Wine, he destroyes the more *effectually*: Yet the evil is not in his Activity, but in the matter wherein he is imployed; the good mettall, as keenness of a Weapon, is its Excellency: but in a mad mans hand, better a wooden than an Iron sword. An Active Spirit is so *excellent*, that it's pity that ever sin should have the using of it; 'twas well for Religion, if the Devil were a Drone, and had no other Servants, but the sluggards of the Earth. But Activity when set right, is of great price in the sight of God, because it sets a great price upon God. Sloathfulness puts a slight upon God; when the Scriptures have set forth *Magna alia Dei*, the great things, and the deep things of God; when the Lord Jesus is evidently set forth as crucified before our eyes, as the Propitiation for sin; when the preciousness of his blood, the tendernefs of his bowels, the riches of his Grace, the sufficiency of his righteousness,

ousness, his satisfaction and pardons, are all held forth in open sight; when the beauties of holiness, the joys of the spirit, that peace which passeth all understanding, are laid forth to view; when the most glorious things are spoken of the City of God, *Jerusalem*, which is above; when God in his word calls to us, Awake sleepers, arise sluggards, see what's before you; all this may be yours, if you will; sloathfulness puts this sight upon all. Tush, all this is not worth the breaking my sleep for; 'tis not all worth my labour to seek after; my ease and my quiet is better to me, than God and all his glory.

We may best understand the value we put on things, by the pains and the cost we are content to be at to purchase them. When sinners bestow themselves so upon the world, will bear such labour and travel, are so constantly, so indefatigably industrious in the pursuance of it; and withall, run such hazards and dangers for it, they make it evident enough what rate they put upon it; he whose time and strength, whose dayes and his nights, yea, whose soul, and his hopes, must all be laid out in a purchase, must all go for a piece of Land, or a little money, or pleasure; we need no other proof, what a bargain he thinks this world to be. *I care not much for this world; 'tis a vanity, a shadow, the fashion of it passeth away; I hope 'tis far enough off my heart, however I am charged with greediness after it.* But what then mean all the expences of thy time, of thy strength, of thy spirits, that thou daily layest out upon it? What means so much hunting after, and heaping it up for thy self? What, hast thou been hunting all this while after shadows, heaping up vanities? No, no, thou mistakest thy self, these shadows are thy substance; these vanities are the God whom thou adorest; if thou didst not prize, thou wouldst not venture so deeply for them.

And so on the other side, when so little is done for God; when any thing must suffice to be spent on Souls, or Eternity; what cheap things do we count them! I love God above all, with all my heart, with all my soul; he is all my hope, and all my desire: What a miserable creature were I, if it were not for my hope in God? What would all the world be to me, should I lose my soul? But dost thou speak in earnest? Dost thou think what thou speakest? what, and so very a Drone in seeking of God? what, and so indifferent, so cold, and so spiritless in thy inquiries after him, in thy motions towards him? so sparing of thy labour, so negligent of duty, so seldom at it, so soon weary, so many delays, so many excuses: How many times hath God called thee after him, and all thine answer hath been an excuse? An excuse instead of an ordinance, an excuse instead of a Prayer, an excuse instead of an Action, an excuse instead of Alms, an excuse instead of an admonition or a reproof; if he will be served with excuses, he shall have service enough, but little besides. I am weary, or 'tis too late, or 'tis cold, and so short and hasty prayer must serve, or none at all. I have much business upon me, a Family, a Farm, and the cares and troubles of it, that I cannot have so much time nor freedom to attend upon God, as others have, and so a Sermon lost, a Sacrament lost. I live amongst ill Neighbours, if I should be so forward, and so active for God, so zealous, and so spiritual in my discourse, in my way, I should be but a scoff and a reproach, and it may be a prey to evil men. I want ability to speak to the edification of others, I have not the boldness as others have, to reprove or admonish; I pray thee, have me excused. Wise men indeed, an excuse instead of a duty! 'Tis all one, as if when the Lord calls to thee, *Come to me, and be saved*, thy answer should be, I pray thee excuse me, I must to the Devil, and be damned.

But

But is this thy love ? Is this thy zeal ? Is this thy valuing of God above all ?

Tremble sluggard ; what ever excuses thou findest out, to substitute in the room of duty, this is that thou canst never excuse, nor acquit thy self of, *a slighting of God*. Thy very excuses will accuse thee for a sloathful servant, and this for a slighter of God ; whilst the Apostle says, *I reckon, that the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed* : But I reckon, saist thou, that all that glory to come, is not worthy to be compared with the present labour.

But now Activity and Industry puts a great price upon God ; this is written upon all our labours, *He is worthy for whom I do all this*. Some of the most humble, watchful, laborious Christians, do sometimes complain, Oh, I fear I love not God ; his favour, his honour, is little set by by me ; but whence then is thy care to please God ? Whence are all thy labours of love ? Dost watch, and pray, and work, and run ? Canst spend and be spent for God, and yet not love him ? Dost live to God, canst dye for God, and yet not prize him ? What greater proof canst give of love, than such labour ?

2. Activity is necessary. It is a vain thing to think of making any thing for Religion without it ; the work of it is too great to be done by lying still ; the comforts of it lye too deep to be gotten out by a wish. There's many a poor man in this world, that would be the richest man in the Country, if riches may be gotten by a wish ; he may as soon wish himself into wealth, as thou into grace and comfort. This one thing, mens not being able to bear the labour of Religion, is a Rock, at which many a soul hath split, and suffered an Eternal Wrack.

He that hath some love to holiness, and yet not so much as to carry him through the work of holiness, is short of sincerity; and short of sincerity, short of salvation. He that sticks not at labour, will not stick at suffering: he that slugs at doing, will shrink back from suffering. Say not, there's a Lyon in the streets; overcome the Lyon, and you will not fear the Bear. Get over (Difficulties) and there's but one stile more (D stress) betwixt thee and glory. Pass the first, and thou wilt be the more bold to venture the latter. Holy Activity will be a witness of thy sincerity; carry this witness in thine heart, and then which way ever the world does go, and what storms ever may fall, thou wilt have this to uphold thee, *Integrity and uprightness shall preserve me, and Eternity reward me.* Where sincerity is the root, and holy Activity the blossome, an eternal weight of glory shall be the fruit. Lye idle, and all will be lost. Take heed of (*Soul take thine ease*) lest the next word thou hear be (*This night shall thy soul be required of thee.*)

Well, this is a second thing included in Obedience, Activity; and this also must be considered ere thou re-selvest. I will obey; but can I labour?

3. *Integrity.* The Obedience which God expects, must be entire Obedience, not only the Obedience of the whole man, but to the whole will of God, Psal. 119. 8. *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy Commandments,* 1 Pet. 1. 14, 15. *As Obedient children, be ye holy in (all manner) of conversation.* Mat. 23. 20. *Teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you.* But of this having spoken more largely elsewhere, it shall suffice to give some short hints.

1. Of one comprehensive duty, wherein all the rest are included, and on which they depend, and that is, *The holding up, and maintaining Gods Authority in the* (cont)

soul. As God hath set up his Authority *over* the soul, his word, which is to have the Government of it; so hath he set up an Authority *in* the soul, the understanding and the Conscience. These Powers, as they are *under Authority*, under the Authority of the word; so they are set in *Authority* over the subordinate and inferiour faculties, the will, and the passions or affections. But sin now hath made a Mutiny and Insurrection; the will rises against reason, and will not be guided; the passions rebel against Conscience, and will not be governed; nay, they do not only resist, but take upon them to command and impose upon Conscience: What the will would have, Conscience must say 'tis reason it should have; must be put upon it, to find out arguments to prove will to be reason, and to determine, that what the will would have done, ought to be done, *facile credimus quod nimis volumus*: We easily bring our opinion to our affections; bring our selves to believe that to be right, which we are unreasonably willing to have to be right: But if it cannot prevail thus far, to gain Conscience to say that's right, which it would have to be right, then it will put hard for it to carry it, whether it be right or wrong. And this rebellion of the will, and so of the passions against the reason, is the great reason of the souls rebellion against God.

When Conscience hath lost its Authority, Gods Authority is gone. Whilst the understanding and the Conscience are maintained in their due Authority, where the will and affections are held in their due subjection, there the Lord reigneth. While Conscience rightly inform'd hath its due, God shall have his due: Where the will and the passions have no more than their due, he shall have his own. God shall be will'd the more, where nothing else is will'd too much. God shall be loved the more, and feared the more, where nothing

else is lov'd and fear'd too much. The more anger, the more hatred, the more grief will be spent upon sin, if it be not inordinately spent elsewhere. O how much service might be done, and how much quiet would be enjoyed in the heart, where this Authority and subjection is maintained and held up.

We may say of our affections, as men say of fire and water, *They are the worst Masters, but the best Servants*. How much should the Lord have of us, were these the only Executioners of his will? If Conscience be commanded by the word, and the will and affections would be commanded by Conscience, what would there then be wanting? We should then not only be abundantly serviceable, but all would be serene and sweet, and comfortable within us, if nothing were will'd, but what should be will'd, we should ever have our will. If nothing were desired, but what should be desired, and no more than it should be lov'd or desired, we should ever have what we love. If we were not angry, or grieved, or afraid, but where we ought, and no more than we ought, what a calm would there be upon our spirits, even in such cases wherein the spirits of others are like a troubled Sea, that cannot be at rest, whose waters cast forth mire & dirt: But where there is such disorder, such rebellion of the inferiour against the Superiour Faculties, there we are at a perpetual loss, both in point of duty and comfort. This therefore is necessary, if we will be obedient; and those that have prov'd what there is in it, do understand that this is hard work.

2. I shall instance in some few particular duties that are *harder then others*. He that will be entirely obedient, must stick at nothing that God will have. There's scarce any thing that God requires, but *Lust* will be quarrelling at, as too hard; but there are some duties harder then others. It shall suffice only to name them;

The

The denial of our selves. The disobliging our nearest Friends. The loving our enemies. The disobeying all the world in their unrighteous commands. Obeying God rather than men. Returning good for evil. Reproving men for sin, especially if they be Superiours, or such on whom we have dependency. The Sacrificing our Isaac, yea parting with all we have.

Well, this also must be considered, ere you resolve; You will obey, but are you for any thing, for every thing the Lord requires.

4. *Circumspection* and care, *Eph. 5. 15.* See that ye walk circumspectly. A little labour will go far with care, but will be nothing without it. 'Tis not he that is hot and busie, and active at all adventures; he that keeps to his Line, and his Rule, he's the obedient Christian. 'Tis not so much action, as regular action, wherein the life of Christianity lies. He that lives by rule, peace be on him, and mercy. Activity without care, is Extravagancy, 'tis care that keeps within compass. He that is all Action, hath the more need of Caution. A Christian must have his eyes in his head, as well as a soul in his body. He that resolves well in generall, and comes not off in particulars, doth but build Castles in the Air. What we ordinarily are, *pro hic & nunc*, in particulars, will best prove what we are. He that is for any thing but this, any time but now, is for nothing.

Circumspection notes two things:

Taking notice.

Taking heed.

He that will be circumspect, must eye and observe what's before him; must have his eye upon his *End*, his *Rule*, and his *Geings*; must eye duty and sin, opportunities and temptations, his times and seasons; he must take heed

breed, as well as take notice ; must keep a strict eye on himself, and hold a strict hand on himself, that he leap not over a duty, nor turn aside to iniquity ; must set a guard upon himself, upon his tongue, upon his eyes, upon his appetite, upon his company, upon his habit, upon his thoughts, upon his passions, upon all the motions of his soul, and the actions of his body.

This will require something. What, not a word but must be weighed ? Not a look but must be look'd to ? Not a thought but must be examined ? Not a sin to be allowed ? not a duty to be abated ? Not a circumstance to be neglected ? Must all be in weight and in measure, by line, and by rule, and this alwayes too ? If *something* might serve, if *sometimes* might suffice, it might be born ; but to keep touch in every point, and that every day, this is an hard saying indeed. But thus it must be, to live as a Christian, and to walk exactly, accurately, precisely, is the same thing. Duty and sin, though they be as far distant as Heaven and Hell, yet there is but an hair betwixt them. The least latitude is a transgression ; either all this, (that is, as to the purpose of the heart) either all this, or nothing.

Well, all this must be considered ; you will be obedient, but will you be circumspect ?

5. *Spirituality*. This must be the *Obedience of Faith*, Rom. 16. 26. It is the very *life of Jesus made manifest in our mortal flesh : I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ; and the life which I now live, in the flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God*. Christians Obedience is *their walking in Christ*, Coloss. 2. 6. *All the acts of it are exerted and performed in the strength of Christ*. I will go in the strength of the Lord ; without him they can do nothing, but can do all things through Christ which strengthened them. I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. I work, I wrestle, I run, yet not I, but Christ

Christ in me ; as the Apostle speaks of his sins, *It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.* 'Tis sin that sins ; so may it be said of duty. It is no more I that do it, but Christ that dwelleth in me. Though both be the act of the person, both the sin and the duty ; yet the principle of the one is Lust, the power of the other is of Christ. Christians cannot go through, and they dare not set upon duty, without looking up to Christ, & leaning upon him for assistance. They cannot go through, and therefore they will not set forth, but in the strength of the Lord. *All their Acts of Obedience are exhibited, and offered up in the Name of Christ.* Their services are their Sacrifices to God, and Christ is their Altar. What is a Sacrifice without an Altar ? Christ is our Altar, which sanctifies our gift ; God looks on all, and so do they, as nothing worth without Christ ; God will not accept, and therefore they will not offer other than the Lamb for their Sacrifice. *All their Acts of Obedience are acknowledged to the praise of Christ.* *It is no more I that do it, but the grace of God which was with me.* Grace does the work, and Grace shall carry away the praise. Christ is all in the race, and therefore on his head the Crown is set *Not unto us Lord, not unto us, but to thy Name be the praise.* Not of us, and therefore not unto us ; of him, and therefore unto him. If *I* am any thing, what others are not ; if *I* have done any thing more than others, no thank to me, and therefore no praise. To him be all, who is All in All to me. Christians Obedience, is their walking in Christ.

Christians Obedience is their *walking in the Spirit.* They have received the Spirit, and they walk in the Spirit, *Gal. 5. 16.* They have not received the Spirit of this world, (their spirit is not flesh) but the Spirit which is of God, *1 Cor. 2. 12.* They are dead to things carnal, the spirit of the world is departed, they have given up this
Ghost,

Ghost: it is the spirit of the living God that lives in them; and in this they live and walk. They walk in the light of the Spirit, in the Power of the Spirit; the Spirit of the Lord steers their course, and fills their Sails; is their Pilot, and their Star, and their wind that carries them on. When they pray, they pray in the spirit; when they hear, they hear in the Spirit; through the Spirit they mortifie the flesh, are crucified to the world; they obey, they suffer, they fight, they overcome, through the Spirit of the living God that is in them: they live in fellowship with the Spirit, and by him with the Father and the Son. They dwell in the Invisible world, their acquaintance and converse is in Heaven, thither they have access; and there they have acceptance; thither they have their recourse, and thence they have their returns; Duties and comforts, are the tokens that are passing betwixt Heaven and Earth. Their life is love, and joy, and praise; these are the most Noble Acts of their Obedience, and these give wings to their hearts, carry them on more swiftly, and more sweetly through all their course.

Oh how heavily do we drive on, how slowly do our Wheels move, when the Spirit of the living God is not ~~in~~ the wheels! Oh how dead are our duties, how lame are our walkings? What low and poor spirited creatures are we? How weak are our hearts, how unripe our fruits; we do but half what we do, there is no heart in our life, we are as bodies without souls, whilst our soul is without a spirit. Oh how sad is it with many of us, upon this account! By our estrangement from God, we have even lost our selves; we are not what we are, because no more where he is. By our distances from Heaven, we are even choaked with the damps of the Earth. We are fit for little, we prosper in nothing. God takes no pleasure, and we take no comfort in anything we do,

do, our spirits are so chil'd and benumbed within, as that we neither make sign in our work, nor riddance of our way. And what are we in our Societies? To how little profit do we meet? How little heat do we get, yea how much do we lose at our brethrns fires? We serve often, but to damp and cool each others spirits, as if it might be no longer said, *Wo to him that is alone*; but wo be to him that is in company: alone hee's more warm.

Christians, I solemnly profess, I am ashamed of my self, and my heart is pained within me, to observe how insipid, how spiritless, how carnal our converses are; how often may we meet? how long may we sit, Christian with Christian, ere any thing that savours of the spirit of a Christian comes from us? Oh, how hard must we strain for a few gracious words! How little does come? How heartless when it comes? How very few of us are there, whose ordinary converse speaks us to be men of another world, whose business, and whose delight lies above, and are in good earnest pressing on towards Heaven? How seldome, and how short-breath'd are our spiritual discourses? How little must suffice? How quickly are we diverted to things carnal and sensual? Sure 'tis our little Communion with God, that hath thus incarnated the communion of Saints.

Oh let us live more in the fellowship of the Spirit, and we shall have fellowship one with another, to better purpose. Let us warm our selves at the Son, let's dwell more in his beams, and we shall get and give more Light and Heat. Thus must it be considered ere we resolve, what there is in this Obedience.

2. It must be considered *What is it like to be attended with all from without*. What suffering it may cost us, what scorn, and contempt, and reproaches, and persecutions of all sorts; its like to set Earth and Hell upon our backs; if carnal counsels, and fleshly policies; if all the powers

Powers of darkness, if might and malice can do it; this way will be made too hot, and too hard for thee; tribulation, great tribulation thou must expect, and canst not escape; and the more strict and circumspect, the hotter must thou look thine assaults will be.

Professors of Religion that are of the largest size, that are not so strict to their rule, but they can dispense with duty; nor so forward in point of zeal and activity, but they can remit and abate, as occasion serves, may escape this persecuting world the better; but he that will be faithful, who ever escape, is sure to be made a prey. This also must be well considered, *I will follow Christ, but can I drink of the Cup that he drunk of? Can I be Baptized with the Baptism, the Baptism of Blood that he was Baptized with?*

There are persons who sometimes take up the profession of Religion, and resolve all on a sudden they will follow Christ, not understanding what there is in it, or what Christianity may stand them in; who by that they have look'd a little farther, and find it another manner of difficulty then at first they imagined; and withall, find the Armies of the Aliens to fall on, the Dogs to tear, the Wolves to worry, the Eagles, and the Vultures, and all the Birds of Prey, to pitch upon them; and begin in earnest to feel the smart of Religion, in those persecutions that are rais'd upon them for it, presently make their retreat, and go back, *Where am I? What have I chosen? Is this to be a Christian? Doth Christ look for all this from his followers, and will he leave them to such violence and rapine, as the reward of their faithfulness to his Name? I never thought it had been such hot service; and if I cannot be a Saint at a cheaper rate than this, follow Christ who will for me; let those that have nothing to lose, or can bear so much labour, and pains, and violence, take it up if they please; for my part, I must look*

to my self, I must not be undone.

Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest; said that Scribe, *Mat. 20. 7.* Men thou understandest not what thou sayest. Dost know whither I am going, where my dwelling, what my lodging is? *The Foxes have holes, and the Birds of the Air have Nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head:* And behold, there's an end of the Scribes Christianity, we hear not one word more of it.

But now, he that both knows what 'tis to be a Disciple, that hath look'd through Religion, through the length and breadth of it, hath duly weighed all that can be said for, or against his taking it up, hath *examined the grounds* and reasons he hath for it, what weight there is in them, hath *considered the Objections*, hath cast up the cost and charges of it, and as the issue and result of the most serious debate, stands *settled in his judgment*, that all things considered, it is indisputably the best, and wisest, and safest course he can take, *It's beyond all controversy, without all dispute* incomparably better for me to hearken to the Lord in all that he shall require, and to run all hazards with him, and that presently; from this day forward, to the end of my life. He that stands thus settled in his judgment, and thereupon feels his soul fixing it self in this *peremptory resolution*: Well, through the Grace of God I will be his servant, I give up my self to the Government of his will, to follow him in righteousness and holiness all my dayes. I am sensible it's no light thing to be a Christian; I see I must be subject, I see I must be circumspect, I see I must be active, I must stick at nothing that God will have, I see this flesh will be pained and put hard to it, will sting and groan under so severe a yoke. I see the Devil and this evil world will be upon me, laying on more load, to make my bargain as dear as they can: but be there in it what there will,
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let it cost me never so dear, I am at a point ; I will venture all upon it, The Lord is my God, and him will I follow in all things that he shall speak ; I put my self into the everlasting Arms ; I trust upon everlasting strength ; I will go forth in the name of the Lord, and now speak Lord, for I will hear.

This sincere resolution, this will hold out ; when our holy inclinations are so rooted and strong, that they bear down all fleshly inclinations ; when our assent to Scripture is so firm, that it overballances all objections against it ; when our reasons for Religion are so high and weighty, that they weigh down the highest pretences against it ; when we have thoroughly considered what there is in it, and compar'd all that can be said for, or against our following the Lord, and upon the whole matter we judge it our best course, and accordingly resolve for it, this is sincere resolution, this is the obedience of the heart.

2. *Obedience of the life.* This is the Decree bringing faith, or holy inclination and resolution springing up into action, and is a necessary proof of the soundness of the resolution.

Though sincere resolution be Obedience in Gods account ; yet that resolution which (supposing there be time and opportunity) does not break forth into act, is undoubtedly unsound and deceitful. There are two things infallibly included in spiritual life ; *a will, and a power*, Grace is *the disposing, and the enabling* the heart for an holy life ; and where there is both a will and a power, performance will certainly follow. This sincerity of actual Obedience, is that which the Prayer of the Psalmist looks to, *Psal. 119. 80. Let my heart be sound (in thy statutes) that I be not ashamed.*

There is a *soundness in the Faith*, and a *soundness in the statutes* of the Lord. Faith notes in Scripture, either
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the Doctrine of Faith, or the Grace of Faith. And accordingly, soundness in the Faith, signifies both the receiving and entertaining sound Doctrine, and the sound or sincere embracing that Doctrine. Soundness in the Statutes of the Lord, notes especially the *Practise*, the living or walking uprightly under the power of that Doctrine, under the Government and Obedience of the Statutes of the Lord. What this Obedience of life is, it's easie to gather out of what hath been spoken touching the Obedience of the heart; I shall only add, that this Obedience is then sound and sincere, when

1. In General, the whole course of life is the issue of the mentioned sincere resolution; when the life is the birth of the purpose, the fruit growing up out of that holy Root. There may be actions materially good and holy, that yet are not gracious actions, because they arise not from a right spring. When the soul hath devoted it self to God in Christ, and *believingly, understandingly,* and *deliberately* decreed or determined in his strength to keep his word; and this decree or determination, goes into the performances of the life, and is the root and soul of that holy course we walk in; there's sincerity.

Some persons may be found, who have taken up the profession, and go far in the practise of Godliness, abstaining from gross sins, yea, and making attempts upon the mortifications of inward lusts; applying themselves to the duties of Religion, Praying, Hearing, Reading, Meditating, discoursing of God, and the things of God, exercising themselves in the works of righteousness and mercy, being Meek, Temperate, Patient; and if all this do arise only from the advantages of a good Nature, good Education, good Society or Acquaintance, a powerful Ministry, or the workings of Natural Conscience, as possibly it may, and doth not spring forth

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from such a fixed well-bottomed^d resolution, it is short of sincerity. Whatever the blades be, they have no Root, and will certainly wither away.

2. In particular actions, when they are done in simplicity and singleness of heart unto the Lord; when whatever sinful mixtures there may sometimes be of carnal respects, that may have an influence upon the exerting and bringing them forth; yet the great poise that moves the VVheels, the swaying motive that brings us on, is God, and our respect to his Will and Honour.

Now for this also the Lord undertakes, promising not only *assistance*, but *success*; *sufficient* Grace, and *efficacious* Grace: *I will cause them to walk in my statutes, and they (shall) keep my judgments and do them.* I will not only teach them my Statutes, I will not only incline their hearts to my Testimonies; I will not only strengthen them for my work; but I will cause them to walk in my Statutes. The event shall be sure, they (shall) keep my judgments, and do them; my Word shall fail, my promises shall be of none effect; let me be accounted unfaithful, if I do not make them faithful to me.

CHAP. XVI.

Perseverance in the Covenant.

8. **P**ERSEVERANCE, J. r. 32. 40. *I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me.*

The perseverance of the Saints is founded on the Election of God, and the immutability of his Counsel; The

The foundation of the Lord standeth sure. Rom. 8. 38. Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. This Golden Chain will hold, not a link if it shall be broken; on whomsoever the first link *Election*, hath taken hold, it will infallibly bring him up to the last, *Glory*. God is not as man, that he should repent. But not to wade farther into the deep; our business lies in the promise of God.

There are two sorts of Promises concerning perseverance. There are promises.

} To Perseverance.
} Of Perseverance.

1. The Promise of Eternal Life is made to *Perseverance*, Hold out to the end, and be saved. Overcome and reign. *Be faithful to the death, and I will give thee a Crown of life, Rev. 2. 10. If thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever. 1 Chron. 28. 9. If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.* Christians, beware of Apostacy, beware of presumption; *Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.* Let it not be said of you, ye (did) run well. He runs well, that gives not off; that sits not down on this side of the goal. *So run that ye may obtain.*

2. There are promises of *perseverance*. The Covenant of God is an everlasting Covenant. He hath commanded his Covenant for ever, *Psal. 111. 5.*

There are two things in the fore-mentioned Scripture, *Jer. 32. 40.* secured to Believers, which secure their perseverance.

1. God will not depart from them.
2. They shall not depart from him.

1. God will not depart from them. *I will not turn away from them.* God is with me, but I fear I shall provoke him away : I shall weary him out by my sins, and drive him from me : No saith the Lord, I will not turn away from them, to do them good. I will never fail thee, nor forsake thee.

2. They shall not depart from him. 'Tis true, the Lord will be with me, but 'tis only while I am with him; if I depart, he will depart; if I forsake him, he will cast me off for ever. Here's my great fear, that I shall turn away from him, there is in me an evil heart of unbelief, that's ever departing from the living God. Oh this false and fickle heart, I dare not trust it for an hour; I doubt it will be gone ere I am aware; my corruptions are strong, my temptations are many, every day brings its temptations; and I am in great fear, that by one means or other, one day or other, I shall fall before them, and depart from the living God ! No sayes God, fear not, thou shalt not depart; *I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. They shall be kept by my Almighty Power, through faith unto salvation.* My Grace shall be with them, and my Grace shall be sufficient for them, and shall preserve them to my Heavenly Kingdom.

And here is the Saints security : The Lord God will not turn away from them, nor ever suffer them to run away from him. If the promise fail, then may their faith also fail. 'Tis true, there may be *gradual* declinings and departures of the Saints from Christ for a season; but total or final there shall not be : They shall not be of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. Though they fall, they shall rise again; they may turn, but they shall return. As hypocrites will not stay (with) Christ alwayes, so neither will Saints always stay from him. And there's a

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like reason of both: Sinners sometimes will step aside and salute Religion, and take some turns with Christ but after a while, away they must again : and there is a double reason of it.

1. There's that within them } that will fetch them
2. There's one without them } back.

1. There's that within them that will fetch them back. Corrupt nature, the power of unmortified Lust, this is it that bears the sway in their hearts; and however for the time, the stream may be somewhat turned out of its course, or bay'd up; however by the impetus of some external Motives or Arguments, or the *impulses* of an awakened Conscience, or some sudden heat of affection, they are carried on after, and in some fair compliance with the Lord Jesus; yet when the Bay is removed, when the external force is spent, Conscience laid to sleep, the heat of the affection allaid, which is often almost as soon out as in, their very Natures will reduce, and bring them back to their old course. What is it that pulls a Stone, or a lump of Clay down again, that is thrown into the Air? Why, when the *vis impressa* by which they were forced up, is spent, their natures, their innate gravities will bring them down to their place. Sinners need no other weights to pull them down to this Earth, than their Earthly hearts.

2. There's one without them that will fetch them off, Satan the God of this world, whose they are, and whom they serve, who though he indulge them so much liberty for their Religion, as is consistent with their Captive state, and may possibly secure them the more under his Dominion, (Hypocrites are often the faster to Satan, for being so near to Christ) the very Religion they have, is but the Devils snare, by which he holds them back from Religion; yet lest by venturing them too far, they should be lost to him at last, he that first tempted them

them so near to Christ, (Hypocrites are often beholding to the Devil for the Religion they have) will quickly tempt them back again.

And so on the other side there are the like reasons why Saints cannot alwayes wander, or stay away from Christ.

1. There's that within them, which will bring them back. *The grace of God* within them will bring them home. The Grace of God, is now their nature. Sinners whilst walking with Christ, and Saints whilst wandring from Christ, are both under a force, they are carried against the stream? when the winds are down that carried them on, they will return to their course. The grace of God is the seed of God, *He that is born of God sinneth not*; (that is, not unto death) *the seed of God remaineth in him*. The seed of God is immortal seed; it may languish, and be ready to dye, but it shall not dye, it shall recover.

2. There's one above them which will bring them back though he suffer them for a time to wander from the way. *Of those whom thou hast given me I have lost none*. He hath lost none, and he will lose none. He sends a word of commandment after them, *Jer. 3. 14. Return O backsliding Children, for I am married to you*. Whether are you running? Whom are you following after? Come back from your Lovers, return to your Husband. I am married to you, and we may not part.

After the word of Command, he sends a word of Promise, *vers. 22. I will heal your back-slidings*. Return from your back-slidings, and I will heal them. I will forgive your back-slidings, and I will cure you of your back-sliding heart. All the breaches they have made shall be made up; I will pass by all that you have done, and be reconciled to you. *If you will turn, return and I will receive you*. And this word of promise, is a word

Word of Power. I will bring you to Zion, then shall he say, I will go and return to my first Husband. Hos. 2. Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God, Jer. 3. 22. He that will not leave his Israel after the flesh with their idolls, much less will he leave his Israel after the Spirit, Phil. 1. 6. Being confident of this very thing, that he that hath begun a good work, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

A good work may be said to be begun in a double sence.

1. *When there is some good thing a doing* : Or when something is done towards it; when it is *in fieri*. When the Lord hath been ploughing upon the fallow ground, making his Batteries against the strong Hold, shaking secure hearts, breaking false hopes, awakening Consciences, convincing sinners, spreading sin, and death, and hell before them, entring upon a treaty with them, and perswading them over to Christ, to make an escape : There may be hopes in this, the pains of travel gives hopes of a Birth. But this may go back, and after the highest hopes, prove an abortion. Sinners, awakened sinners, beware you make not a stand at the threshold; beware that our plough'd ground be not left to lye fallow. Beware that the Womb prove not the Grave of all your hopes. Mistake not Conviction for Conversion; make on, let not your God, nor your souls lose the things which have been wrought.

2. *When there is some good thing done*. When 'tis *in facto esse*. VVhen the rubbish is removed, and the first stone is laid; when the plough hath been going; and the good seed is sown; when the new-creature hath passed the Birth; when Christ is formed, and the light of life is newly sprung up in the soul; if there be but a grain of *Mustard-seed*, the least and lowest degree of saving Grace broken forth in the heart, the question is not,

whether it be much or little, if it be grace, there's the immortal seed, there's the good work begun, which shall be carried on till the day of Jesus Christ. *Grace is a security for glory.* Yet beware Christians, let not this security make you secure; though there be an harvest in the seed, yet the seed must be cherished, watched, and well looked to, that it may grow up to the harvest: He that lets it dye for want of looking to, proves that it was dead whilst alive. Let not your falling short of Glory, prove that your Grace was not Grace.

Christians, lay hold on the promise, and lift up your heads, you are under fears; however it be with you for the present, you are in doubt how it may be; your way is long and dangerous, yet your hearts are deceitful and unstable; you are going on at present, but doubt how you shall hold out: I may meet with Lyons in the way, which may fright me back; I may lose my way, and never recover; I may be weary, and faint in the way, and lye down and give off. My Lord and my soul, have been often upon the parting pin; I have been almost gone, and I tremble to think what may yet become of me: Yet remember who it is that hath said, *I will not turn from you to do you good; I will put my fear in your hearts, and you shall not depart from me.* Rise soul, take care for to day, and take no thought for to morrow. Mind the present duty, go on thy way, though weeping and trembling, and hard bestead: go on thy way, and then commit thy way and thy self to him, by whose mighty power thou shalt be kept through faith unto salvation. Faithful is he that hath called you, and will do it.

And now you have all. *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter.* God hath made a Covenant with his people, hath given *himself* for their portion, *his Son* for their price, *his spirit* for their guide in the way

way, *his Earth* for their accommodation by the way, *his Angels* for their Guard, *The powers of darkness and Death* for their spoils, *everlasting Glory* for their Crown. And because their way is difficult, and their work is contrary to them, he hath given them all that grace that is necessary to bring them to Glory. In general, a *new heart* in all things suited to their way, and thoroughly furnished for every good work. In particular, *Knowledge* to guide; *oneness* to fix and intend; *tenderness* to submit to and yield; *love* to constrain and bring on; *fear* to fence and hold in; *obedience* to perform and bring forth; and *perseverance* to go through, and hold out to the end; and there Grace and Glory meet. This is the Covenant of Grace; this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.

It will be said, but if God hath undertaken all this for us, what is there then left on us to do? Here's a Doctrine according to sinners hearts; if this be Gospel, then, Soul take thine ease, take thy liberty, cast away care, make much of thy body, God will take care of the rest.

But is there nothing required of us? Let the Scriptures speak, *Ezek. 36. 37. Yet for all this will I be enquired of, or sought unto, by the house of Israel*; otherwise let them look for no such things, He that will not ask in faith, *let not that man think he shall receive anything of the Lord, Jam. 1. 7.* And can he think to receive any thing that neither believes nor prays? That neither prays in faith, nor prays at all, *Phil. 2. 12. 13. Its God works in you, both to will and to do*: What then? Therefore sit you still and do nothing? No such matter; therefore work out your salvation with fear and trembling, saith the Apostle. The promise of God was never intended to make the command of God of none effect. God in promising Grace, promises a power for duty; and as he doth not give, so we must not receive that power or grace of God in vain. Whilst he gives
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what he requires, he still requires what he gives. That promise of God (*ye shall be my people*) though he undertakes to make it good, yet it is also the matter of our stipulation. And in this promise wherein the Lord assures us, what *de facto* we (shall) be, is included a precept, wherein we may understand what, *de jure*, we (ought) to be.

In undertaking to give us a new heart, a tender and obedient, a persevering heart, the Lord doth promise, both to make us what we should be, and to help us in what we are bound to do, and gives us at once a clear hint, both of our mercy and duty. This is the sence and sum of that promise, the Lord will work all that in us, and will help and cause us to perform all that which (is required) unto salvation; and so the *Promissum* on Gods part, doth not make void, but establish the *Debitum* on ours. *Do we then make void the Law through Faith? Nay, we establish the Law.*

Though it be certain as to the event, that all that's necessary to salvation, shall be accomplished in us; God hath undertaken that, yet it is all together as certain, that God hath made our loving him, fearing him; obeying his whole will, and our sincerity and perseverance herein, so necessary, that we cannot otherwise be saved.

Christians, mistake not, nor abuse the grace of the Gospel. The Lord never meant your mercy should make void your obligation to duty. Redemption from sin, was never intended as to a toleration of sin. He gives not his Spirit in favour of the flesh. What he undertakes to work for you, was never with a mind to maintain you in idleness, *Tit. 2. 11, 12*. The grace of God that bringeth salvation, teacheth us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

Though you are saved by grace; yet you are still (in a sense)

sense) debtors to the whole Law. Perfect obedience to the whole Law, even to the utmost *Iota*, is still due from you? and if it be not in your hearts to pay all that you owe; that is, if there be any duty commanded in the whole book of God, that you must be dispensed with, that you will not set your hearts to observe and obey; if there be any one sin that you must be excused in, and will not part with; if there be any, the highest pitch of holy Care, Activity, Industry, Zeal for God and Holiness, that you will not be perswaded to press hard after, this is an evidence of such an unsound heart, as hath no part in the Gospel, or the salvation thereof. Perfection is still due, though sincerity will be accepted. Sincerity shall be accepted, but what is sincerity less than an hearty willingness to be perfect, attested by a striving and pressing on to that mark which is set before us.

O admire and bless the Lord, the Lord for grace; but do not turn the grace of God into licentiousness. Shall we continue in sin, because grace hath abounded? Will ye thus requite the Lord? Will ye thus deceive yourselves, O foolish people and unwise? Will you slight him, because he hath loved you? Kick at him, because he hath cared for you? Shake off his yoke, because he hath secured you the Crown! Will you serve his Enemies, because he hath saved you from them? Will you nourish your diseases, because he hath said he will cure you? Will you live and not eat? Reap and not plough? Will you not eat, because he hath given you meat? Will you not run, because he hath given you legs? Nor work because he hath given you hands? Nor watch because he hath given you eyes? Or will you tempt the Lord, and call that your trust in him? Awake from such madness.

Christians, say not (if God will I shall) whether I take care or no, beleive or no, repent or no, be obedient, or rebellious; Whether I awake or sleep, work or be idle;

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my unbelief, my disobedience, my negligence shall not make the faith of God of none effect. But rather, since God hath said (you shall) let thine heart answer (I will) walk in his Statutes. Arise O my soul, up and be doing work on thy salvation because its God that worketh in thee to will and to do: Shake off thy sloth, set to thy work, run out thy race since God hath said, thou shalt not run, nor labour in vain. And look to it, for however thy idleness or greatest unfaithfulness, will not make void the Covenant of God, yet will it make manifest, that thou hast no part nor lot in it.

But to all these glorious things that have been spoken, possibly some will reply; O if all this be so, then happy Saints indeed: *Happy are the people that are in such a case, yea, blessed are the people whose God is the Lord.* But will the Lord indeed do all these things for mortals? Will he take notice of worms? shall such dry bones live? will he set such vile dust, as the apple of his eye? Is not this too good to be true? Too great to be believed? Are we not all this while but in a dream, or a fools Paradise? O that I were sure the one half were as it hath been told me; too great to be believed? As if it must be questioned whether the Sun be light, because it dazzles our eyes. But what certainly would you have? Is all this too great for the great and Almighty God to do, who hath said, *Isa. 55. 9. As the Heavens are higher then the Earth, so are my wayes higher then your wayes, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* Can he not do it, who can do all things; Will he not do it, when he hath said he will? Will the Lord mock? Can God deceive? shall his Word, yea and his Oath too, those two immutable things in which in it impossible for God to lye, can these fail? If you should hear the Lord himself speaking to you from Heaven with audible voice, my Covenant I make with thee, and it is my intent and purpose to perform every word that is written in it, according

to the plain import and meaning thereof; there shall not a tittle fail, neither will I alter the thing that is gone forth of my lips. Heaven and Earth shall fail, but my Word shall not fail; trust to it, trust everlasting truth, trust to everlasting strength, Fear not, for there shall not fail one word of all that I have spoken by all my servants the Prophets.

If you should hear the Lord speaking thus to you from Heaven, what would you say? Would not this satisfy you? Why search the Scriptures, that *more sure word of Prophecy*, 2 Pet. i 19. Read them diligently, understand what thou readeſt, & then ſay, if thou doſt not there find the Lord ſpeaking fully to thee the following words,

CHAP. XVII.

God ſpeaking from Mount *Gerizim*. Or, the Goſpel in a Map, being a ſhort view of the exceeding great and precious promiſes † by another hand. † Mr. I. A.

The voice of the Herauld. **O** All ye Inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the Earth; Come ſee, and hear; gather your ſelves together unto the Proclamation of the great King. Hear, you that are far off, and you that are near: He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear. I am the voice of one crying in the wilderneſs, Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Let every Valley be exalted, and every Mountain made low, for the Glory of the Lord is to be revealed. Go thorough, go thorough the Gates, prepare the way: Caſt up, caſt up the high-way; gather out the ſtones, liſt up the ſtandard for the people; for the Lord proclaimeth ſalvation to the ends of the earth. Tidings, tidings, O ye Captives! Hear all ye that look for ſalvation in Iſrael; Behold I bring glad tidings of great joy

joy which shall be unto all people. Blessed news ! Prepare your ears, and hearts ; the Lord hath commanded me, saying ; Go unto the people, and sanctifie them, let them wash and be ready, for the Lord is coming down upon Mount Sion, in the sight of all the Nations ; Not in Earthquakes and Fire, not in Clouds and Darknes, not in Thundrings and Burnings, rending the Mountains, and breaking the Rocks in pieces : He speaks not to you out of the Blackness, and Darknes, and Tempests ; you shall say no more, let not God speak to us lest we dye ; He cometh peaceably, the law of kindness is in his mouth, he preacheth peace, peace, to him that is far off, and to him that is near.

Behold how he cometh leaping upon the Mountains ; he hath passed Mount Ebal, no more wrath or cursing ; he is come to Mount Gerizim, where he standeth to bless the people : As Mordecai to his Nation, he writeth the words of truth and peace, seeking the welfare of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.

Behold how he cometh, cloathed with flames of Love, with bowells of Compassion, plenteous Redemption, and multiplyed Pardons. O how pregnant is his Love ! O the rollings of his Bowells ! Oh how full are his breasts, even aking till they are eased by the sucking of his hungry Children !

Hearken therefore, O ye Children, hearken to me. To you it is commanded, O people, Nations, and Languages, that at what time you hear the joyful sound, the Tramp of Jubile, the tydings of peace in the voice of the everlasting Gospel, that you fall down before the Throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever.

Arise, and come away ; Prepare, prepare you ; Hear not with an uncircumcised ear ; you are not upon a common thing. Behold the Throne is set, the Throne of Grace ; where Majesty and Mercy dwell together : from thence will the

Lord.

Lord meet you, from thence will he commune with you, from the Mercy-seat, from between the Cherubims, up of the Ark on the Testimony. Lo, the Lord cometh out of his Pavilion, the mighty God from Sion. Selah. His glory covereth the Heavens, the Earth is full of his praise. A fire (of love) goeth before him, mercy and truth are round about him, righteousness and peace are the habitation of his Throne; he rideth on his Horses and Chariots of Salvation, the Covenant of life and peace is in his mouth.

Rejoyce ye Heavens, make a joyful noise to the Lord all the Earth. Let the Sea roar, the Floods clap their hands, and the multitudes of the Isles rejoyce. Stand forth the Host of Heaven, prepare your Harps, cast down your Crowns, be ready with your Trumps, bring forth your golden Vials full of Odours, for our voices will jar, our strings will break, we cannot reach the Note of our Makers praise.

Yet let them that dwell in the dust arise and sing. Bear your part in this glorious service, but consider and attend. Call out your souls, and all that is within you, lift up your voices, fix your eyes, enlarge your hearts, intend all their powers; there is work for them all. Be intent, and serious, you cannot strain too high.

Come forth ye graces, beset the way, be all in readiness. Stand forth Faith, and Hope: Flame O Love, come ye warm desires, and break with longing: Let fear with all veneration do its obeysance: Joy prepare thy songs, call up all the daughters of Musick, to salute the Lord as he passeth by. Let the Generations of the Saints appear, and spread the way with Boughs, and Garments of salvation, and Songs of Deliverance, Deut. 29. 10. to the 13. Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God, your Captains, your Elders, your Officers, with all the men of Israel, your little Ones, your Wives, and the stranger that is within thy Camp, from the kerner of wood, to the

the drawing of Water : That thou shouldest enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his Oath which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day : That he may establish thee to day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee; and as he hath sworn.

I have done my errand. The Messenger of the Morning disappeareth, when the Orient Sun cometh forth out of his Chambers, I vanish. I put my mouth in the dust. The voice of the Lord ! The soft and still voice ! O my soul, wrap thy face in the mantle, and bow thyself to the ground, and put thee in the cleft of the Rock, while Jehovah proclaimeth his Name, and maketh all his goodness to pass before thee.

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Hear O ye ends of the Earth, The mighty God, the Lord hath spoken, Gather my Saints unto me, those that have made a Covenant with me by sacrifice. *a* Behold I establish my Covenant between me and you. *b* By my Holiness have I sworn, that I will be your Covenant friend. I lift up my hand to Heaven, I swear I live for ever; and because *I* live, you shall live also. *c* *I* will be yours: *d* Yours to all intents and purposes: your refuge and your rest, *e* your Patron and your Portion; *f* your Heritage and your Hope; your God and your Guide. *g* While *I* have, you shall never want; and what *I* am to my self, *I* will be to you. *h* And you shall be my people; *i*, a chosen generation, a Kingdom of Priests, a holy Nation, a peculiar Treasure unto me above all people. *j* *I* call Heaven and Earth to witness this day, that *I* take you for mine for ever. My Name shall be upon you, and you shall be Pillars in the Temple of your God, and shall go no more out. *k*

My Livery shall you wear, and the stamp of my own Face shall you carry: *l* and *I* will make you my Witness and the Epistles of Christ unto the world, *m* and you shall be chosen Vessels, to bear my Name before the Sons of men. And that you may see that *I* am in earnest with you; *n* *I* make with you an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; and do here solemnly deliver it to you as my act and deed, sealed with sacred blood, *o* and ratified with the Oath of a God; *p* a God that cannot lye, that knows no place for Repentance. *q* Come ye blessed, receive the Instrument of your salvation take the writing, behold the Seals; here are the conveyances of the Kingdome. Fear not, the donation is free and full, See it

is written in blood, founded on the All-sufficient merits of your suretie, *r* in whom *I* am pleased, *f* whose death makes this Testament unchangeable for ever; so that your names can never be put out, nor your Inheritance alienated, nor your Legacies diminished; nothing may be altered, nothing added, nothing subtracted, no not for ever. *t* Happie art thou, O *I*sr^{ae}l! Who is like unto thee, O people! *n* onlie believe, and know your own blessedness. Attend O my Children, unto the blessings of your Father, and hear and know the glorious immunities, and the Royal Prerogatives that *I* here confirm upon you.

Here *I* seal you your pardons. Though your sins be as many as the sand, and as mightie as the mountains; *I* will drown them in the deeps of my bottomless mercies. *w* *I* will be merciful to your unrighteousness; *I* will multiply to pardon, *x* where your sins have abounded, my grace shall super-abound; though they be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though red like crimson, they shall be as wool. *y* Behold *I* declare my self satisfied, and pronounce you absolved: *x* The price is paid, your debts are cleared, your bonds are cancelled. *a* Col. 2. 13, 14.

What ever the Law, or Conscience, or the Accuser, hath to charge upon you, here *I* exonerate you, *I* discharge you. *I*, even *I* am he, that blotched out your transgressions, for my Names sake. Who shall lay anie thing to your charge, when *I* acquit you? Who shall impeach, or implead you, when *I* proclaim you guiltless? *b* Sons, Daughters, be of good chear, your sins are forgiven you, *e* *I* will sprinkle your consciences, and put

put the voice of peace in their mouths, & they shall be your Registers, in which I will record your Pardon, and the voice of Guilt, and Wrath, and terror shall cease. *Heb. 10. 22. Isa. 27. 4, 5.*

Here I sign your release from the house of bondage ; f Come forth ye captives, come forth ye prisoners of hope ; for I have found a ransom : g I proclaim ² Our release from liberty to the captives, and the opening ^{the house of bondage} of the prison to them that are bound. ^h particularly. Behold I have broken your bonds, and ^f Rom. 6. 17. 18: shook the foundations of your prisons, ¹ Cor. 7. 24. g Job 33:23. 18. ^h Isa. 61. 1: & 42. 7. i Luk. 4: 18. & Zech. 9. 11. opened the Iron Gates ; i by the blood of the Covenant have I sent forth the prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water. k Arise, O redeemed of the Lord, put off the rayment of your captivities, arise and come away.

The dark and noisom prison of sin shall no longer detain you. l I will loose your fetters, and knock off your bolts. Sin ^{From the dark and noisome prison of sin. l} Joh. 8. 34, 35. shall not have dominion over you. ^m Rom. 6. 14.

I will heal your back slidings, I will subdue your iniquities. n I wil sanctifie you wholly, o and put my fear in your hearts, that you shall not depart from me. p Though your corruptions be strong and many; yet ⁿ Mic: 7. 19. Jer. 3. 1:2. o 1 Thes. 5. 23. the aids of my Spirit, and cleansing virtue of my word, and physick of my correction, shal so work together with your ^p Jer. 32. 40. q Ezek. 36. 37. Eph. 5. 26. Isa. 27. 9. prayers & indeavors, as that they shal not finally prevail against you, but shal surely fal before you. q

From the strong and stinking gaol of the grave do I deliver you. O death, I wil be thy plague, ^{From the strong & stinking gaol of the Grave. Hos. 13. 14.} O grave, I will be thy destruction ; r my Beloved shal not ever see corruption. ^r Psal. 6. 10.

I will change your rottenness into glory, & make your dust arise & praise me. s Dan. 12. 2, 3. Isa. 26. 19.

What is sown in weakness, I wil raise in power : what is sown

sown in corruption, I will raise in incorruption: what is
u 1 Cor. 15. 42, 43. sown a natural body, I will raise a spiri-
44. w 1 Cor. 15. tual body. *a* This very flesh of yours, this
53. x 2 Cor. 5. 4. corruptible flesh, shall put on incorrup-
1 Cor. 15. 54. tion; & this mortal shall put on immor-
tality. *x* Death shall be swallowed up in victory, and
mortality of life. *x* Fear not, O my children; Come, and I
will shew you the enemy that you dreaded. See, here lies
the King of Terrors, like *Sisera* in the Tent, fastned to
the ground, with the nail struck through his temples. Be-
hold the grateful present, the head of your Enemy in a
Charger: I bequeath you your conquered Adversary, and
y 1 Cor. 3. 22. z 1 make over death as your Legacie. *y* O
Cor. 15. 55. a lla. death where is thy sting? where now is
26. 20. b lla. 57. 2. thine armour wherein thou trustedst? *z*
c Psal. 16. 9. Job Come my people, enter into your cham-
19. 25, 26, 27. d bers: *a* Come to your beds of dust, and
Psal. 49. 15. e Phil. lay you down in peace, and let your flesh
3. 21. f Mat. 13. rest in hope; *b* for even in this flesh shall
43. you see God. *c* O ye slain of death, your carkisses, now as
loathsom as the Carrion in the ditch, will I redeem from
the power of the grave, *b* & fashion those vile bodies like
unto the glorious body of your exalted Redeemer. *e* Look
if you can on the Sun, when shining in his strength, with
such dazzling glory will I cloath you, O ye of little faith. *f*
From the terrible dungeon of eternal darkness do I here-
From the dungeon by free you. Fear not, you shall not be
of eternal darkness. hurt of the second death, *g* you are deli-
Rev. 2. 11. Rom. vered from the wrath to come, and shall
8. 1. h 1 Thes. 5. 10. never come into condemnation. *b* The
Jo. 5. 24. i Rev. 14. flames of *Tophet* shall not be able to singe
11. k Mat. 25. 30. the hairs of your head, no nor the smel of the fire pass up-
on you. Stand upon the brink, & look down into the hor-
rible pit, the infernal prison, from whence I have freed
you; See you how the smoak of their torments ascendeth
for ever? hear you the cursings & ravings, the roarings & *k*
blasphe-

blasphemies? What think you of those hellish fiends? would you have been willing to have had them for your companions and tormentors? what think you of those chains of darkness? or of the river of brimston, of the instruments of torment for soul & body, of those weep-

ings, and bewailings, & gnashing of teeth? Can you think of an everlasting banishment, of a *go ye cursed*? could you dwell with everlasting, could you abide with devouring fire? This is the inheritance you were born to. But I have cut off the entail, & wrought for you a great salvation. I have not ordained you to wrath, but my thoughts towards you are thoughts of peace.

Here I deliver you your protection. From all your enemies will I save you. I grant you a protection from the Arrests of the Law: your Surety hath fully answered it: *My Justice is satisfied, my wrath is pacified, my honour is repaired.* Behold, I am near that justify you, who is he that shall condemn you?

From the usurped dominion of the powers of darkness. I will tread Satan shortly under you, and will set your feet in triumph upon the necks of your enemies. Let not your hearts be troubled; though you be to wrestle with principalities & powers, & the rulers of the darkness of this world: for stronger is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. He may bruise your heel, but you shall bruise his head. Behold your Redeemer leading captivity captive, spoiling principalities and powers, and triumphing over them openly in his cross. See how Satan falleth like lightning from heaven, and the Sampson of your salvation beareth away the gates of hell, posts and all upon his shoulders, and setteth them up as Trophies of his Victory: how he pulleth out the throat of the

Lyon, and lifeth up the heart of the Traitor upon the top of his spear, and washeth his hands, and dyeth his robes in the blood of those your enemies. *Isa. 63. 1, 2, 3.*

From the victory of the world, *c* neither its frowns, nor its flatteries shall be too hard for your victorious faith. Though it raise up *Egypt*, and *Amalek*, and *Mab*, and all its whole Militia against you, yet it shall never keep

From the victory of the world. you out of *Canaan*. Be of good comfort your Lord hath overcome the world. *d*

Joh. 5. 4. Gal. 1. 4. 4 Joh. 16. 33. c 1 Cor. 10. 13 f 1 Cor. 13. 22. Though its temptations be very powerful, yet this upon my faithfulness will I promise you, that no such shall come upon you, but what you shall be able to bear.

But if *I* see such tryalls (which you fear) would be too hard for your graces, and overthrow your souls, *I* will never suffer them to come upon you; nay, *I* will make your enemy to serve you, *e* and do bequeath the world as part of your dowry to you. *f*

From the Curse of the Cross, *g* Affliction shall prove a wholsom Cup to you; your Lord hath drunk the Venome into his own body, and what remains for you is but a healthful Potion, which *I* will promise you shall work for your good. *h* Be not afraid to drink, nor desire the cup should pass from you: *I* bless the cup

From the Curse of the Cross. before *I* give it unto you. *i* Drink you all of it, and be thankful; you shall find my blessing at the bottome of the cup, to sweeten the sharpest afflictions to you, *k*
g Psal. 119. 71. h Rom. 8. 28. i Job 5. 17. 8cc. k Jam. 5. 1. 12. Psal. 94. 12. l Isa. 43. 2. m Hof. 2. 14. n Isa. 25. 4. *I* will stand by you in all conditions, and be a fast friend to you in every change. *l* In the Wilderness *I* will speak

comfortably to you, and in the fire, and in the water, *I* will be with you. *m* *I* will be a strength to the poor, and a strength to the needy in his distress; a refuge from the storm, and a shadow from the heat, when the blast of terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. *n* Your sufferings shall

shall not be a cup of wrath, but a Grace-cup; not a Curse, but a Cure; not a cup of trembling, but a cup of blessing to you. *o* They shall not hurt you, but heal you. *p* My blessing shall attend you in every condition. *q* I say not only blessed shall you be in your Basket, and blessed in your store; but blessed shall you be in your povertie, *r* & blessed shall you be in your streights: not onlie blessed shall you be in your Cities, and blessed shall you be in your Fields, but blessed shall you be in your bonds, & blessed shall you be in your banishment. *f* Blessed shall you *o* Heb. 12. 6, 7, 8. *p* be when you are persecuted, and when *Ps.* 119. 67. *q* Gen. 26. 3. *r* Gen. 28. 15 you are reviled, and your name is cast *f* *Mat.* 9. 29, 30. *r* *1* out as evil: Yea, then doubly blessed. *t* *Pet.* 3. 14. *t* *Mat.* 5. 10, 11, 12. *u* *1* *Pet.* 4. 13, 14. *Luke* 6. 20, 21, 22. My choicest blessings, greatest good, and richest sweets, will I put into your evil things. *u* These happie immunities, these glorious Liberties of the Sons of God, by this immutable Charter I do for ever settle upon you; and do in, and with my Covenant, unalterable, irrevocable, everlastinglie convey unto you, and confirm upon you.

Yea, *I* will not onlie free you from your miseries, but will confer upon you Royal Priviledges & Prerogatives, and instate you into higher & greater happiness than ever you have fallen from. Lo, *I* give my self *The Priviledges & Prerogatives of the Covenant.* to you, and all things with my self.

Behold, O ye Sons of men! Behold and wonder. Be astonished O Heavens! Be moved, ye strong foundations of the Earth! For you shall be my witnesses. This day do *I* by covenant bestow my self upon my servants. *u* *I* will be your God, for ever and ever. *x* Your *Own* God: *y* Nothing in the world is so much your own as *I*. The houses that you have built, that you have bought, are not so much yours as *I* am. Here you are Tenants at will; but *I* am your eternal Inheritance. *z* These are loans for a season,

He gives himself to us for our God.

u Gen. 17. 7. *x* Psal. 48. 14. Jer. 32. 38.

Rev. 21. 3. *y* Psal. 67. 6. Psal. 16. 2.

z Psal. 16. 5. with

73. 26.

a Psal. 96: 1. *b* 1 but I am your dwelling place in all Ge-
Cor. 6. 19. 20. *c* Jer. *generations.* *a* You have no where so great
 3. 19. *Isa.* 63. 16: *a* propriety, so sure and unalterable
d Psal. 50. 15. Jer. claim, as you have here. What do you
 49. 11. Psal. 145. count your own? Do you count your
 18. *To be to us in.* bodies your own, your souls your own?
Head of all Relati- Nay these are not your own; they are
ons. *Our Friend.* bought with a price. *b* But you may bold-
Isa. 41. 8. *Jam.* 2. 2. ly make your claim to me; you may free-
 3. *f* Psal. 25. 14. ly challenge an interest in me. *c* Come
Joh. 15. 15. *g* Eph. near, and fear not; where should you be
 3. 12. Heb. 4. 16.

free, if not with your own? where should you be
 bold, if not at home? You are never in all the world so
 much at home, as when you are with me. You may freely
 make use of me, or of any of my Attributes, when e-
 ver you have need. *d* I will be all to you that you can
 wish, *a* I will be a friend to you. *f* My secrets shall be
 with you, and you shall have all freedom of access to me,
 and liberty to pour out all your heart into my bosom. *g*
Our Physician.

I will be a Physician to you. *I* will
b Hof. 14. 4. Psal. heal your back-slidings, and cure all your
 103. 3. diseases. *b* Fear not, never did soul
 miscarry, that left it self in my hands, and would but
 follow my prescriptions.

I will be a shepherd to you. *Be not*
Our Shepherd. afraid of evil tidings, for *I* am with you;
a Psal. 23. 1. & 80. my rod, and my staff shall comfort you.
I *k* Psal. 23. *Isa.* You shall not want, for *I* will feed you;
 43. 14. Gen. 33. you shall not wander (to be lost) for *I*
 31. 14. will restore you. *I* will cause you to lie

down in green pastures, and lead you beside the still wa-
 ters. *k* *I* will gather you with mine arm, and carry you
 in my bosom, and will lead on softly, as the flock and the
 children be able to endure. *l* *If* Officers be careless, *I*
 will do the work my self. *I* will judge between cattle and
 cattle. *I* will seek that which was lost, and bring again

that
 that

that which was driven away, and bind up that which was broken, and strengthen that which was sick ; but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and will feed them with Judgment. *m* I will watch over my flock by night. *n* Behold, I have appointed my Ministers as your Watchmen, and Overseers that watch for your Souls. *o* Yea, mine Angels shall be your Watchers, and shall keep a constant guard upon my flock. *p* And if peradventure the servants should sleep, *q* mine own eyes shall keep a perpetual watch over you, by night, and by day. *r* The Keeper of *Israel* never slumbereth, nor sleepeth, *s* nor withdraweth his eyes from the righteous. *t* I will guide you with mine eye ; I will never trust you out of mine own sight. *u*

I will be a Sovereign to you. The Lord is your Judge, the Lord is your Law-giver, the Lord is your King. *w* Fear not the unrighteousness of men, I will judge your cause, I will defend your rights. *x* You shall not stand at mans Bar; you shall not be cast at their Vote ; let them curse, I will bless ; let them condemn, I will justify.

When you come upon tryal for your lives, to have your eternal state decided, you shall see your friend, your Father, upon the Bench. *a* Into my hands shall your Cause be cast, and you shall surely stand in Judgment, and be found at the right hand among the sheep, & hear the King say, Come ye blessed, inherit the Kingdom. *b*

I will be an Husband to you. *c* In loving kindness, and in mercies will I betroth you unto me for ever. *d* I will espouse your interest, and will be as one with you, and you with

m Ezek. 34. 16, 17. with verse 2: 3, 4. *n* Isa. 27: 3. *o* Heb. 13. 17. Acts 20. 28. *p* Dan. 3. 17. 23. Psal. 34. 7. *q* Mar. 13. 25, 27. *r* Psal. 34. 15. & 33. 18. *s* Chron. 16. 9. *t* Psal. 121. 3, 4, 5. *u* Job 36. 7. *v* Psal. 32. 8.

Our Sovereign. *w* Isa. 33. 22. *x* Deut. 32. 36. Ps. 140. 12. *y* 1 Cor. 9. 4. *z* 1 Cor. 4. 3, 5. *2* Cor. 10. 18. *3* Isa. 50. 9. Gen. 12. 3.

a Psal. 88. 9. Eccl. 3. 16, 17. *b* Mar. 25. 33, 34. Mar. 10. 32.

Our Husband. *c* I. sa. 54. 5. *d* Hos. 2: 19, 20.

with me. *e* You shall be for me, and not for another, and I also will be for you. Though I found you as an helpless Infant, exposed in its blood, all your unworthiness doth not discourage me. Loe I have look'd upon you, & spread my skirt over you, & put my comeliness upon you. Moreover, I swear unto you, & enter into Covenant with you,

e Mat. 25. 40, 45.
*A*ct. 9. 4, 5. *Zac.* 3. 3
f *Hol.* 3. 3. *g* *Eze.*
 16. 4. to the 10. *h*
Jer. 24. 7. & 30. 21,
 32. & 31, 33, 34.
i *Rev.* 21. 7. *k* *Eze.*
 44. 28. *Jer.* 51. 19.
Psal. 119. 57.

and you shall be mine. *g* Behold, I do, (as it were) put my self out of my own power, and do here solemnly, in this my Marriage Covenant, make away my self to you, *h* and with my self all things. *i* [I will be an everlasting Portion to you. *k* Lift up now your eyes Eastward, and Westward, and Northward, and Southward.

Have you not a worthie portion, a goodly heritage? Can you cast up your riches, or count your own happiness? Can you fathom Immesitie, or reach Omnipotencie, or comprehend Eternity? All this is yours. I wil set open all my treasures to you, I will keep back nothing from you.

He maketh over himself to us in all his Essential Perfections, and personal Relations.

In all his Essential Perfections, his Eternity as the date of our happiness.

All the Attributes in the God-head, & all the persons in the God-head, do I hereby make over to you. I will be yours in all my Essential Perfections, and in all my Personal Relations.

In all mine Essential Perfections.

Mine Eternity shall be the date of your happiness.

I am the Eternal God, and while I am, I will be life & blessedness to you. *r* I will be a never-failing fountain of Joy, and Peace, and Bliss unto you. I am the first, and last, that was, and is, and is to come, and mine eternal Power and Godhead shall be bound to you. *s*

I will be your God, your Father, your Friend, while I have any being. I have made mine everlasting

lasting choice in pitching upon you. *p* Fear not for the eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. *q* My durable riches and righteousness shall be yours. *r* Though all should forsake you, yet will I not forsake you. When the world, and all that is therein shall be burnt up, I will be a standing portion for you. When you are forgotten among the dead, with everlasting loving kindness will I remember you. *t*

p Psal. 132. 113. 14.
Hof. 2. 19. *q* Deut. 33. 27. *r* Pro. 8. 10.
Heb. 13. 5. Psal. 27
10. *t* Isa. 54. 10.

Mine unchangeableness shall be the rock of your rest. u When all the world is like the tumbling Ocean round about you, here you may fix and settle. I am your resting place. *w*

His unchangeableness is the Rock of our Rest. u Mal. 3. Psal. 62. 6, 7. & 92. 15. *w* Jer. 50. 6. 2 Chron. 14. 11.

The immutability of my Nature, and of my counsel, and of my Covenant, are sure footing for your faith, and a firm foundation for your strong and everlasting Consolation. *x* When you are afflicted, tossed with tempests, *y* and not comforted; put in to me: I am an Haven of Hope, I am an Harbour of Rest for you; here cast your Anchors, and you shall never be moved. *z*

2 Tim. 2. 19. Heb. 6. 17. 18. *y* Isa. 54. 11. Jer. 17. 13. 17. Psal. 46. 1, 2, 5. & 125. 1.

Mine Omnipotency shall be your guard. I am God Almighty, your Almighty Protector, your Almighty Benefactor. a

His omnipotency for our Guard. a Gen. 15. 1. and 17. 1.

What though your enemies are many; more are they that are with you, than they that are against you; for I am with you. *b* What though they are mighty? they are not Almighty. Your Father is greater than all, and none shall pluck you (pluck while they will) out of my hands. *c* Who can hinder my power, or obstruct my salvation? *d* Who is like unto the God of *Je- shurun*, who rideth on the Heaven for your help, & in his excellency on the Skie? I am the sword of your strength, and

b 2 Chron. 32. 7, 8. 2 Kings 6. 16. Joh. 10. 29. *d* Isa. 43. 13. Dan. 4. 35. 2 Pet. 2. 9.

and the shield of your excellency. *e* I am your rock, and your fortress, your deliverer, your strength, the horn of your salvation, and your high tower. *f* I will maintain you against all the power of the enemy. You shall never sink, if omnipotency can support you. *g* The gates of hell shall not prevail against you. *h* Your enemies shall find hard work of it. They shall overcome Victory, or enervate Omnipotency, or corrupt Fidelity, or change immutability, or else they cannot finally prevail against you, either they shall bow or break. *i* Though they should exalt themselves as the Eagle, though they should set their nest among the stars, even there will I bring them down, saith the Lord. *k*

My faithfulness shall be your security, l my truth, yea, my oath shall fail if ever you come off losers by me. m I will make you to confess, when you see the issue & upshot of all my providences, that I was a God worthy to be trusted, worthy to be believed, worthy to be rested in, and relied upon. *n* If you walk not in my judgments, you must look for my threats and frowns, yea, and blows too, and you shall see that I am not in jest with you, nor will indulge you in your sins. *o* Nevertheless my loving kindness will I never take from you, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.

His Mercies as our stone. p I am the Father of mercies, & such a Father I will be to you. *q* I am the fountain of mercies, & this fountain shall be ever open to you. *r* My mercies are very many, and they shall be multiplied towards you; *s* very great, & they shall be magnified upon you, *t* very

very sure ; and they shall be for ever sure to you ; *u* very tender, and they shall be infinitely tender of you. *w* Though the Fig-tree do not blossom, nor the Vine bear, nor the Flock bring forth ; fear not, for my compassions fail not. *x* Surely goodness and mercy shall follow you all the days of your lives. *y* Even to your old age I am he, & even to hoary hairs will I carry you: I have made, & I will bear, even I will carry and deliver you.

z I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, that I will not turn away from you to do you good. *a* I swear that I will shew you the kindness of God. *b* I can as soon forget to be God, as forget to be gracious. *c* While my name is Jehovah, merciful, gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, I will never forget to shew mercy to you. *d* All my ways towards you, shall be mercy and truth. *e* I have sworn that I would not be wroth with you, nor rebuke you ; for the Mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed ; but my kindness shall not depart from you, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on you.

u Isa. 55. 3. *w* Psal. 119. 156. with 103. 4. *x* Hab. 3. 17. Lam. 3. 22. *y* Psal. 23. 6. *z* Isa. 46. 4. *a* Jer. 32. 40. *b* 1 Sam. 20. 14. 15. 17. with 25. 9. 10. *c* Psal. 77. 9. *d* Psal. 103. 17. with 34. 6, 7. Psalm 25. 10.

Mine Omniscience shall be your Overseer, mine eyes shall be ever open, observing your wants to relieve them, and your wrongs to avenge them, *f* Mine Ears shall be ever open to hear the prayers of my poor, the cries of mine oppressed, the clamours, the columnies and reproaches of your enemies. *g* Surely I have seen your affliction, and know your sorrows. And shall not God avenge his own Elect ? I will avenge them speedily. *h* I see the secret Plots, and Designs of your Enemies against you, *** and will disannul their Counsels, *i* I see

His Omniscience as our Overseer.
f 1 Pet. 3. 12. Exod. 3. 7. 8. Psal. 34. 15. Exo. 2. 24, 25. Zep. 2. 8, 9, 10. *h* Luke 18. 7, 8. *i* Jer. 18. 23. Isa. 8. 10. with 29. 14. 15. Psal. 33. 10.

your

your secret integritie, and the uprightness of your hearts towards me, while the carnal and censorious world condemn you as hypocrites. *k* Your secret prayers, fasts, and tears, which the world knoweth not of, I observe them, and record them. *l* Your secret care to please me, your secret pains with your own hearts, your secret self-searchings, and self-denial; I see them all, and your Father which seeth in secret, shall reward them openly. *m*

My wisdom shall be your Counsellour. *n* If anie want wisdom, let him ask of me, and it shall be given him. I will be your deliverer. *o* Mic. 7. 8. *p* When you are in darkness, I will be a light to you. *o* I will make your way plain before you. *p* You are but short-sighted, but I will be eyes to you. *q* I will watch over you, to bring upon you all the good I have promised, *r* and to keep off all the evil you fear, or to turn it into good. *s* You shall have your food in its season, and your Physick in its season, Mercies, afflictions, all suitable, and in their season. *t*

I will out-wit your enemies, & make their Oracles to speak but folly. *u* The old Serpent shal not deceive you. *u* Isa. 19. 11. to 15. I will acquaint you with his devices. *w* *2* Cor. 2. 11. The deceitful hearts you fear, shall not undo you; I will discover their wiles.

I know how to deliver the godlie out of temptation, & to reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be punished. *x* Trust in me with all your hearts, & lean not to your own understanding. *y* I am God that performeth all things for you. *z* I wil forfeit the reputation of my wisdom, if I make you not to acknowledge, when you see the end of the Lord. *a* (though at present you wonder, & reach not the meaning of

of my proceedings *b* that all my works are in weight, & in number, & in time, & in order: *c* if I force Jer. 12. 1. Ec. 3. 14 you not to cry out, manifold are thy works, d Psal. 33. 4. & 145 in wisdom hast thou made them all. *d* 10. Psal. 104. 24.

My justice shall be your Revenger and Rewarder. Fear not to approach; fury is not in me. *f* My Justice is not onlie appeased towards you, but engaged for you. I am so fully satisfied in the sacrifice of my beloved, that Justice it self, that was as a flaming sword drawn against you, doth now greatly befriend you; and that which was an amazing, confounding terrour, shall now become *His Justice, as our* your relief and consolation. *Avenger, and Re-* *warder.* *e* 2 Thess. 1. 6. 2 Tim. 4. 8. *f* Psal. 17. 4. *g* Eccl. 3. 16. 17. & 5. 8. Psal. 9. 6 10. 10 14. and 97. 1. with 99. 1. *b* Psal. 6. 9. & 103. 6. *i* Psal. 146. 7. Heb. 6. 10. *k* 1 Joh. 1. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 8. 2 Thess. 4. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 23.

h Let me know your grievances, my Justice shall right your wrongs, and reward your services. *i* You may conclude upon your Pardons, conclude upon your Crowns, conclude upon reputation for all your injuries, and all from the sweet consideration of my justice; *k* the thought of which, to others, is as the horror of the shadow of death. If you sin, despair not; remember, I am just to forgive you. If you are at any pains or cost for me, do not count it lost; for I am not unrighteous to forget you. I am the righteous Judge, that have laid up for you, and will set on you the Crown of Righteousness. Are you reviled, persecuted, defamed? Forget not that I am righteous to render tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you that are troubled, rest with me. Though all your services and sufferings deserve not the least good at my hands, yet as I have freely passed my promise to reward them, so I will as justly keep it.

Mine omnipresence shall be company for you. *l* Surelie I will be with you, to bless you. *m* No bolts, nor bars, nor bonds, nor banishment, shall remove you from *me*

His Omnipresence,
as company for us.
l 1 Chron. 22. 18.
Joh. 1 5. 9. *lla.* 41.
10. m Gen. 26. 24.
me

me, nor keep my presence, and the influences of Heaven from you. *n* I am alwaies with you: *o* in your darkest nights, in your deepest dangers, I am at hand with you, a very present help in the time of trouble. *p* I am not a God afar off, or asleep, or in a journey, when you need my counsel, mine ear, or mine aid: I am alwaies nigh unto them that fear me.

No *Patmos*, no Prison shall hinder the presence of my grace from you. *r* My presence shall perfume the noysome Wards, and lighten the darkest Dungeon where you can be thrust. *s*

My Holiness shall be a Fountain of Grace to you. *t* I am the God of hope, *u* the God of love, *w* the God of patience, *x* the Author and finisher of faith, *y* the God of all grace, *z* and I will give grace to you. *a* My design is to make you partakers of my Holiness. *b* I will be a constant spring of spiritual life to you. *c* The water that I shall give you, shall be in you as a Well of water, springing up into everlasting life. The seed of life, that I shall put into you, shall be so fed, and cherished, and maintained by my power, that it shall be immortal. *e* The Unction that you shall receive from the holy One, shall abide in you, and teach you all things (necessary for you) and as it hath taught you, you shall abide in him. *f* Keep but the Pipes open, and ply the means which I have prescribed, and you shall flourish in the Courts of your God. *g*

Yes, I will satisfie your souls in drought, and make fat your bones, and you shall be like a watered Garden: Lo, I will be as the dew unto you, and you shall grow as the Lilly, and cast forth your Roots as *Lebanon*; and your branches shall spread, and your beauty shall be as the O-

live-tree. *i* You shall still bring forth fruit in old age, you shall be fat and flourishing.

My Sovereignty shall be commanded by you. l You shall be my Favorites, men of Power, to prevail with me. *m* All mine Attributes shall be at the command of your Prayers. *n*

In sum, *Mine All sufficiency shall be the lot of your inheritance.* My fulness is your treasure. *p* My house is your home, *q* You may come as freely to my store, as to your own Cupbord, *r* You may have your hand as freely in my Treasures, as in your own Purses. You cannot ask too much, you cannot look for too much from me. *s* I will give you, or be my self to you instead of all comforts. *t* You shall have children, or I will be better to you than ten children. *u* You shall have riches, or *I* will be more to you than all riches. *w*

You shall have friends if best for you, or else *I* will be your Comforter in your solitude, *x* your Counsellor in your distress. *y* If you leave Father, or Mother, or Houses, or Lands for my sake, you shall have an hundred fold, in me even in this time. *z* When your enemies shall remove your comforts, it shall be but as the letting the Cistern run, and opening my fountain, or putting out the Candles, and letting sin the Sun. The swelling of the waters shall rise higher the Ark of your comfort. *a* I will be the staffe of bread to you; your life, and the strength of your dayes. *b* I will be the house and home to you, you shall dwell with me; yea, dwell in me, and I in you. *c* I will stand and fall with you. *d* I will repair your losse, and relieve

l Hof. 14. 5. 6.

His Sovereignty to be (as it were) commanded by us. l Gen 32. 26. 28 Deut. 9. 14. *m* Hof. 12. 4. Ja. 5. 17, 18. *n* Isa. 45. 15

His All-sufficiency to be the lot of our inheritance. o Gen.

17. 1. Lam. 7. 14.

p Ps. 16. 5, 6. *p* Numb.

18. 20. Deu. 10. 9.

Psal. 16. 5, 6. q Psal.

91. 19. *r* Eph. 3. 12.

s Eph 3. 20. *Mat. 7. 4*

t Gen. 15. 1. *Pla. 83.*

u. u Isa 56. 3. *w* 2

Cor. 6. 10.

x Isa. 51. 3. *Joh. 14.*

21. 2 *Cor. 1. 3, 4. y*

Pla. 73. 25. z *Mar.*

16. 30. a *Rom. 5. 3.*

Heb. 19. 34. Act. 5.

41. b *Deut. 30. 20.*

Isa. 33. 16. c *Deut.*

33. 12. Joh 14. 23.

1 John 3. 24. d *Pla.*

37. 17, 24. & 54. 4.

Isa 41. 10.

your

your needs. *c* Can you burn out the Lamp of Heaven, or

e Phil. 4. 19. Mark 8. 35. Mat. 19. 27. *l*ave out the boundless Ocean with your hands? *Why*, the Sun shall be dark, and the Sea be dry, before the Father of Lights, the Fountain of Mercies shall be exhausted. Behold, though the world hath been spending upon the stock of *my* mercy, ever since I created man upon Earth, yet it runs with full stream still. My Sun doth diffuse its Raies, and disburse its Light, and yet shines as bright as ever; much more can I dispence of my goodness, and fill my creatures brim full, and running over, & yet have never the less in my self: and till this all-sufficiency be spent, you shall never be undone. I am the God of *Abraham* and of *Isaac*, and of *Jacob*, and whatever I was to them, I will be to you.

Are you in want, you know whither to go. I am ever at home, you shall not go away empty from my door. Never distract your selves with cares and fears, but make known your requests by prayer & supplication unto me. *f* Phil. 4. 6. *g* Ps. 73. 26. Isa. 63. 5. Psal. 102. 17. *h* Psal. 49. 15. 2 Cor. 5. 1. Luk. 16. 22. I will help when all do fail. *g* When friends fail, and heart fails; when your eye strings crack, and your heart-strings crack, when your acquaintance leaves you, and your souls leave you, my bosome shall be open to you. *h* I will lock up your dust, I will receive your souls.

And mine infiniteness shall be the extent of your inheritance. Can you by searching finde out God? Can you finde His infiniteness to out the Almighty to Perfection? it is as high as Heaven, what can you do? deeper than Hell, what can you know? *i* This height incomprehensible, this deep unfathomable shall be all yours, for ever yours. *i* Job 1. 7. 8. *with* Psal. 50. 7. *h* Exe. 44. 28. Eph. 3. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 16. Psal. 145. 3. I am your inheritance, which no Line can measure, no Arithmetick can value no Surveyor can describe. *h*

Lift up now your eyes to the ancient mountains, & to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills, all that you can see is yours : but your short sight cannot ken the moietie of what I give you ; and when you see and know most, you are no less than infinitely short of the discovery of your own riches. *Job 26. 14.*

Yea further, *I will be yours in all my* *In all his Personal Relations*
Personal Relations.

I am the everlasting Father, and I will be a Father to you. m
I take you for my Sons, and Daughters. n Behold, I receive you not as servants, but as Sons, to abide *God the Father to be a Father to us.*
in my house for ever. o Whatever love or *m Jo. 10. 17. n 1 Cor. 6. 18. o John 8. 35, 36. p Mat. 6. 31, 32. q Luk. 11. 13. r Isa. 49. 15. s Job. 7. 17, Joh. 14. 2. t 1 Pet. 5. 7. Mat. 7. 9. u Luke 12. 40. 31, 32. Heb. 12. 7.*
care Children may look for from their Father, that may you expect from me; p and so much more, as I am wiser, and greater, and better than any earthly Parents. *u* earthly Fathers will give good things to their Children, much more will I give to you. *q* If such cannot forget their Children, much less will I forget you. *r* What would my Children have ? Your Fathers heart, and your Fathers house : Your Fathers care, and your Fathers ear : Your fathers bread, & your Fathers rod, *u* these shall be all yours.

You shall have *My fatherly affection*; my *He promisseth his fatherly affection. w*
heart I share among you, my tenderest *1 Joh 3. 1. Jer. 31. 3. Isa. 54. 8.*
loves I bestow upon you. *w*

My fatherly compassion As a Father pit- *His fatherly compassion. x*
tieth his Children, so will I pitie you. *x* I will consider your frame, and not be ex- *Psalm 103. 13, 14. y Psalm 78. 39.*
treme to mark what is done amiss by you, but cover all with a mantle of my excusing love. *y*

My fatherly instruction. I will cause you to hear the sweet voice behind you, saying, *This is the way. z* I will tender your weakness, and inculcate mine ad- *His fatherly instruction. Isa. 30. 21*
monitions, line upon line, and feed you

a Isa. 28. 13. *i* Cor. with milk, when you cannot digest
 3. 2. *b* Psal. 31. 8. stronger meat. *a* I will instruct you, and
 guide you with mine eye. *b*

My fatherly protection. In my fear is strong confidence,
His fatherly protection and my children shall have a place of
 Zion. *c* Pro. 14. 26. refuge. *c* My Name shall be your strong
d Pro. 18. 10. *e* Zec. Tower, to which you may at all times
 9. 12. *f* Psal. 48. 3. flee, and be safe. *d* To your strong Hold
 De. 4. 7. Job 10. 29. ye Prisoners of hope. *e* I am an open re-
 fuge, a near and inviolable refuge for you. *f*

My fatherly provision. Be not afraid of want, in your Fa-
His fatherly provision thers house there is bread enough. *g* I will
 Zion. *g* Psal. 34. 9. care for your bodies. Care not for what
 Lu. 15. 17. *b* Mat. 6. you shall eat, drink, or put on. Let it suf-
 25. 10 to the end, Lu. fice you, that your heavenly Father
 12. 22, to the 34. *i* knoweth that you have need of all thing.
 Joh 6. 36, & 59. Ps. knoweth that you have need of all thing.
 15. 14. Lam. 3. 24. *b* I will provide for your souls. Meat for
 them, and Mansions for them, and portions for them. *i*

Behold, I have spread the table of my Gospel for you,
 Isa 25. 5. Mat. 22. with privileges and comforts that no
 4. Prov 9. 2. *l* Joh. man taketh from you. *k* I have set before
 6. 48, Rev. 12. 7, & you the bread of life, and the tree of life
 22. 17. and the water of life. *l* Eat, O Friends,
 drink abundantly, O beloved.

But all this is but a taste of what *I* have prepared. You
 must have but smiles and hints now, and be contented
 with glimpses and glances here; but thou shalt be shortly
 taken up into your Fathers bosome, and live for ever in
 the fullest views of his glory. *1 Thes. 4. 17.*

His fatherly probation. *My fatherly probation.* I will chasten you,
 Zion. *n* 1 Cor. 11. 32 because I love you, that may not be
 Prov. 3. 11, 12. condemned with the World. *n*

God the Son to be a
 Husband to us.

My son I give unto you, in a Marriage-
Covenant for ever. *o* I make him over
 o Isa. 9. & 42 6. to you, as Wisdom, for your illuminati-
 o Cor. 13. 2. on ;

ous Righteousness, for your Justification ; Sanctification, for the Curing of your Corruptions ; Redemption, for your Deliverance from your Enemies. *p* I bestow him upon you, with all his fulness, all his merits, and all his graces. He shall be yours in all his Offices. I have annointed him for a Prophet. Are you ignorant he shall teach you ; he shall be eye-salve to you : *q* I have sent him *p* 1 Cor. 1. 30 *q* Isa. 49. 6. & 42. 10. Re. 3. 18 *r* Luke 4. 18. recovering of sight to the blind ; to set at libertie them that are bruised. *r* I have established him by Oath, as a Priest forever. *s* If any sin, he shall be your Advocate *s* Psa. 110. 4. *t* 1 Joh. 2. 1. *z* Zech. 13. 1. *u* 1 Pet. 2. 5. Heb. 13. 15.

He shall expiate your guilt, and make the atonement. *t* Have you any sacrifice, any service to offer, bring it unto him, and you shall receive an answer of peace. *u*

Present your petitions by his hand, him will I accept. *w* Having such an High Priest over the house of God, *x* you may come, and welcome ; come with boldness. Him have I set up as a King upon my holy Hill of *Sion*. He shall rule you, he shall defend you, *y* *w* Joh. 13. 13, 14. *x* He is the King of Righteousness, King Heb. 10. 19, 20, 21, 22. *y* Isa. 9. 6, 7. Mar. 1. 21. *z* Heb. 7. 2. of peace ; and such a King shall he be to you : *z* I will set up his Standard for Jer. 23 6. Eph. 2. 14. you : *a* I will set up his Throne in you *b* *a* Isa. 49. 22 *b* Psa. 110. 2. *c* Isa. 32. 12. He shall reign in Righteousness, and rule in Judgment : and he shall be a *d* Isa. 11. 3, 4, 5. *e* Psa. 110. 1. 1 Cor. 15. 25. *f* Mal. 4. 3. *g* Isa. 60. 14. Zeph. 3. 19. hiding place from the winde, and a covert from the tempest, and the shadow of a great Rock in a weary Land. *c*

he shall hear your Causes, judge your enemies, *d* and reign till he hath put all under his feet. *e* Yea, and under your feet ; for they shall be as ashes under you, and you shall tread them, saith the Lord of Hosts. *f* Yea, I will undo them that afflict you, and all they that despised you. shall bow themselves down at the soles of your feet. *d* And you shall goe forth, and behold the Carcasses :

of the men that have trespassed against me, their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring to all flesh, *Esay* 66. 24.

God the Spirit to be My spirit do I give unto you, for your
Counsellor and Com- Counsellor, and your Comforter. i He shall
forter to us. i Joh. be a constant inmate with you, and shall
 16. 7. Rom. 8. 14 k dwell in you, and abide with you for e-
 Ezek. 36. 27. Joh. ver. k
 14. 16, 17.

I Consecrate you as Temples to his holiness. l He shall
 be your Guide, he shall lead you into all truth. m He shall
 be your advocate, to endite your prayers, and make inter-
 cession for you, and shall fill your mouths with the argu-
 ments that he knows will prevail with
 11 Cor. 3. 16, 17. me. n He shall be Oyl to your Wheels,
 & 6. 19. m Gal. 5 and Strength to your Ancles, Wine to
 18. Joh. 14. 26. n your Hearts, and marrow to your Bones
 Rom. 8. 26. 27. o and Wind to your Sails. He shall wit-
 Rom. 8. 16. p Eph. ness your Adoption. o He shall seal you
 1. 30 & 13. 14. 2 up to the day of redemption, and be to you the earnest of
 Cor. 1. 22. your Inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased
 possession.

He giveth all And as I give you my self, so much
things with himself more all things with my self. q Earth &
both present, and to Heaven, Life and Death, things present,
come. q Rom. 8. 32. and things to come. r
 1. 1 Cor. 3. 22.

Things present ours Things present are yours, I oe I give
 r Eph. 1. 3. you *Calebs* blessing the upper Springs &
 the neather Springs. I will bless you with all spiritual
 blessings in heavenly places in Christ. f

Rom. 9. 4. The up- To you pertaineth the Adoption, and
per springs, or bles- the Glory, and the Covenants, and the
sings spiritual, as A- service of God, and the Promises. t To
doption, Access, Au- you will I give the white Stone, and the
dience, Peace, Perse- new Name, u access into my presence,
verance, &c u Rev. w the acceptation of your persons, x the
 2. 17. w Eph. 3. 12 audience of your prayers. y
 x Eph. 1. 6. y 1 Jo.
 5. 14. 15.

Peace

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. *z* I will undertake for your perseverance, and keep you to the end, then will I crown mine own gift with eternal life. *a* I have made you heirs of God, and co-heirs with your Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall inherit all things. *b*

I have granted you mine Angels for your Guardians. The Courtiers of Heaven shall attend upon you; they shall be all ministring Spirits for your good. *c* Behold, I have given them charge over you, upon their fidelity to look after you, and, as the tender Nurses, to bear you in their arms, and to keep you from coming to any hurt. *d* These shall be as the careful Shepherds, to watch over my flock by night, and to encamp round about my Fold. *e*

My Ministers I give for your Guides. *f* Paul, Apollos, Cephas, all are yours. I am always with them, and they shall be always with you, to the end of the world. *b* You shall have Pastors after mine own heart, and this shall be my Covenant with you, that my Spirit which is upon you, and my words which I have put into your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, nor the mouth of your seed, nor of your seeds seed faith the Lord, from hence forth, and for ever. *k*

In short, all my Officers shall be for the profiting and perfecting of you. *l* All mine Ordinances shall be for edifying and saving of you. *m* The very severities of my house, admonitions, censures, &c. And the whole Discipline of my Family, shall be for preventing of your infection, curing of corruption, procuring your salvation. *n*

My Word have I ordained for con-

The Light of his Word.

9 Psal. 19. 7, 8, 9, 11 converting your soul, enlightning your
 Eph 5. 26. 2 Cor. 3. eyes, rejoycing your hearts, cautioning
 18. p Rom. 3. 2. q you of dangers, cleansing your defile-
 Mat. 4. 47. Eph. 6. 7. ments, and conforming you to mine I-
 r Ps 119. 92, 93: f mage. o To you I commit the Oracles of
 Acts 29. 27. t 2 God. p Here you shall be furnished a-
 Tim. 3. 16. Ps. 119 105. gainst temptations, q hence you shall be
 comforted under distresses and afflictions. r Here you shall
 finde my whole Counsell. s This shall instruct you in your
 way, correct you in your wandrings direct you in the truths
 to be believed, detect to you the errors to be rejected. t
The Pledges of his My Sacraments I give you, as the pled-
 Sacraments. u Rom. ges of my love. You shall freely claim
 4 11. w 1 Cor. 11. them, they are childrens bread. Loe, I
 25 Gen. 17. 10. have given them as seals, to certifie all
 that I have here promised you; u and when these sacred
 signs are delivered unto you, then know, and remember,
 and consider in your hearts, that I therein plight you my
 troth, and set to my hand, and do thereby ratifie and con-
 firm every Article of these Indentures, and do actually
 deliver into your hands this glorious Charter, with all
 its Immunities and Priviledges, as your own for ever. w
The nether Springs, And having sowed to you so largely in
 or mercies tempo- spiritual blessings, shall you not much
 ral. The supply of his more reap the temporal? B: you not of
 Creatures. x Luk. 12. doubtful mind, all these things shall be
 29, 31. y Psal. 8. 3. to added unto you. x My Creatures I grant
 the end. z Jud. 5. 10. for your servants and supplies. y Heaven
 a Job 5. 23. Hof. 2. and earth shall minister to you. All the
 31. b Mat. 6. 25. to stars in their courses shall serve you, and
 the end. (if need be) shall fight for you. z And I will make my
 Covenant for you with the Beasts of the field, & with the
 souls of heaven; and you shall be in league with the stones
 of the field, and all shall be at peace with you. r I will un-
 dertake for all your necessities. Do I feed the Fowls, and
 cloath the Grass, & do you think I will neglect my b Chil-
 dren?

children? I hear the young Ravens when they crie, shall I not much more fulfil the desire of them that fear me? *e* fear not, you shall be sure to want no good thing; *d* and you would not your selves desire riches pleasures, or preferment, to your hurt. I will *e* Psal. 145. 19 with the 149. 9 *d* Psal. 34. 10. *e* P. 2. 111. 5. give meat to them that fear me; I will be ever mindful of my Covenant, *e*

My Providences shall co-operate to your good. *f* The cross wind shall blow you the sooner and swifter into your harbour. You shall be preferred, when you seem most debased & then be greatest gainers, when you seem to be deepest losers, & most effectually promote your good, when you seem most to deny it. *g* Things to come are yours, the perfecting of your souls, the Redemption of your bodies, the consummation of your bliss.

When you have glorified me for a while on earth, and finished the work I have given you to do, you shall be caught up into Paradise, and rest from your labours, and your works shall follow you. *h* I will send of my own Life-guard, to conduct home your departing souls; *i* & receive you among the spirits of just men made perfect. *k* And you shall look back upon *Pharaoh*, and all his Host, and see your enemies dead upon the shore. Then shall be your Redemption from all your afflictions, and all your corruptions. *l* The thorn in the flesh shall be pulled out, and the hour of temptation shall be over, and the tempter for ever out of work.

The sweat shall be wiped off from your brows, and the day of cooling and refreshing shall come, and you shall sit you down for ever under my shadow. *m* For the Lamb that is in the midst of the

The Co operation of his Providences. f
Rom. 8. 28. *g* 2 Cor. 4. 17. Mar. 10. 29. Phil. 1. 29. Things to come ours

At Death in Glorification Initiate. h
Rev. 14. 13. Lu. 23. 43. *The Convey of Angels i* Luk. 16. 22. *k* Heb. 12. 23. *Redemptions from all afflictions and corruptions. l* Luk. 17. 28. Eph. 4. 33. *The thorn in the flesh taken out.*

The sweat wiped off from our brows m A& 3. 19. Heb. 4. 9.

Throne

Throne shall feed you, and lead you to the living Fountains of waters, *Rev. 7. 5.*

The tears shall be wiped away from your eyes, & there shall be no more sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away, and behold I make all things new. *o* I will change *Marah* into *The tears wiped a-* *Naomi*, and the cup of sorrow, into the way from our eyes. cup of salvation; and the bread and wa-
o Rev. 21. 4. 5. p ter of affliction into the wine of eternal
John 16. 20, 21, 22. consolation. *p* You shall take down your
Luke 6. 21. q Rev. Harps from the Willows, and I will turn
19. 1, 4, 6. your Tears into pearls, and your Penitential Psalms into Songs of Deliverance. You shall change your *Ichabods* into *Hosanna's*, and your *Ejabs* of sorrow into *Hallelujabs* of joy. *q*

The Cross shall be taken off from your backs, and you shall come out of your great Tribulations, & wash your Robes, *The Cross taken off* and make them white in the Blood of the from our backs. Lamb; and you shall be before the Throne
r Rev. 7. 14, 15, 16 of God, and serve him night and day in his Temple, and he that sitteth on the Throne shall dwell among you, and you shall hunger no more, and thirst no more, neither shall the Sun light upon you, nor any heat. *r*

The load shall be taken off from your Consciences. Sins nor doubts shall no more defile you nor distress you. *s* I will make an end of sin, and knock off the fetters of your corruptions, & you shall be a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish.
The load taken off from our Conscien-
ces, s Rev. 21. 17.
Heb. 12. 23. t Eph.
5. 27. Rev. 7. 9, 13,
14.

Thus shall you be brought to the King all glorious, in rayment of needle-work, and cloathing of Gold; with gladness and rejoycing shall you be brought, and enter into the Kings Palace. *u* So shall the beloved of the Lord dwell safely by him and you shall stand
The souls admission into the Chamber of Presence, and Vision of God. *u Psal. 45.*
9. 13, 14, 15.

con-

continually before him, & behold the Beautie of the Lord
and hear his Wisdome. *Then will I open in you an everlasting spring of joy, Rev. 4.8. Ps. 16. 11*
and you shall break forth into singing, & never cease more
nor rest day nor night, saying Holy, Holy, Holy. *x*

Thus shall the grand Enemy expire with your breath,
and the body of death be put off with your dying body;
and the day of your death shall be the birth-day of your
glory. *Phil. 1. 27. Luk. 23. 43.*

Have faith in God. *Mark 11. 22.* Wait but a little, and
sorrow shall cease, and sin be no more.

*And then a little longer, and death shall be no more; a but
your last enemy shall be destroyed, & your victory compleated.*
Yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and
you also shall appear with him in glory. *c* Th s same Jesus

which is taken from you into Heaven, *d* *At the Resurrection
In Glorification con-
summate. Redemp-
tion compleat.*
shall so come as he went up into heaven:

and when he cometh, he will receive you
to himself, that where he is, there you
may be also. *e* Behold his sign; he cometh
in the clouds of Heaven with power, and
great glory, and every eye shall see him,

& all the Tribes of the Earth shall mourn
because of him, *f* but you shall lift up
your heads, because the day of your
Redemption draweth nigh. *g* Then shall

he sound his Trump, *b* and make you to
hear his voice in your dust, *i* and shall
send his mighty Angels to gather you
from the four winds of Heaven; *k* who

shall carry you in the triumphant Chariot of the Clouds;
to meet your Lord; *l* and you shall be prepared for him
and presented to him, as a Bride adorned for her Husband.

m And as you have born the Image of the Earthly, so shall
you bear the Image of the Heavenly; *n* and you shall be
ful-

*a Rev. 20. 14. & 21.
4. The return of
the Redeemer. c Heb
10. 37. Col. 3. 4. d
Acts 1. 11. e John
14. 3. f Rev. 1. 7.
Mat. 24. 30. g Luke
21. 28. the rising
of the body. Joh. 5.
28. h 1 Cor. 15. 52.
1 Thes. 4. 16. k
Mat 24. 31. l 1 Thes.
4. 17. m Rev. 2. 2.*

*Full conformity
both in body and
soul to our glorified
Saviour.* *Phi.* 3. 21.
He. 12. 23. *p* *Re.* 3. 5.
*Publick Approbation
and Absolution.*
q *Mat.* 10. 23. & 25.
32, 34, 35, &c. *So-
lemin Espousals.* *r* *Re.*
19. 7, 8. *2* *Cor.* 4. 14.
Mat. 25. 31. *s* *Luke*
13. 28.

*The Coronation and
Exthronement of the
Saints. Their sitting
in judgement upon
the world.* *t* *Rev.* 2.
10. *u* *Re.* 3. 21. *Mat.*
19. 28. *w* *1* *Cor.* 6. 2,
3. *x* *Rev.* 2. 26, 27.
y *Psa.* 49. 14.

fully conformed both in body and spirit, to your glorious head. *o* Then shall he confess you before his Angels, *p* and you shall receive your open Absolution before all flesh, and be owned, approved and applauded in the publick audience of the general Assemblée. *q* And you shall be with all Royal solemnities, espoused unto the King of Glory, in the presence of all his shining Courtiers, *x* to the envie, and gnashing, and terrour of your Adversaries. *f*

So shall your Lord, with his own hand, crown you, *t* and set you in Thornes, *u* and you shall judge Men and Angels, *w* and you shall have power over the Nations, *x* and you shall set your feet upon the necks of your Enemies. *y*

Lo, I have set the very day for your enstallment. *z* *I* have provided your Crowns, I have prepared the Kingdom. *b* Wherefore do you doubt, *O* ye of little faith? *3* *Acts* 17. 31. *a* *2* these are the true sayings of God. *c* *Are* *Tim.* 4. 8. *b* *Mat.* 25. you sure that you are now on Earth? so *34* *Rev.* 19. 9. *d* *1* surely shall you be shortly with me in *Cor.* 13. 12. *Joh* 17 Heaven. Are you sure that you shall die? *24* *c* *The.* 1. 10 so surely shall you rise again in glory. *f* *Rev.* 3. 9. *g* *Eph.* 1. *Lo, I have said it, and who shall reverse* *5, 6, & 2. 7.* *it?* You shall see me face to face, and be with me where I am, and behold my glory. *d* For I will be glorified in my Saints, and admired in all them that believe; *o* and all flesh shall know that I have loved you. *f* For I will make you the instances of my Grace, *g* in whom the whole World shall see, how unutterably the Almighty God can advance the poor Worms-meat, and dust of the ground.

And

And the despisers shall behold, and wonder, and perish :
b for they shall be witnesses to the riches *b* Acts 13. 41. *
 of my magnificence, and exceeding Lu. 16.23. *i* Mat
 greatness of my power. * They shall go 25.46.
 away into everlasting punishment, but you into life eter-
 nal.

For no sooner shall their doom be past, *Our triumphant as-*
 but the bench shall rise, *k* and the Judge *cenſion into Hea-*
 shall return with all his glorious Train; *ven. & Mat. 25.41,*
 with ſound of Trumpet, and ſhouts in- *46. l Pſa. 45. 14, 15.*
 credible ſhall he aſcend, and ſhall lead *Mat. 25.23. Joh. 14*
 you to your Fathers houſe. / Then ſhall *2. with 2 Cor. 5. 1.*
 the Triumfal Arches liſt up their heads, *m John 12. 26.*
 and the everlaſting Gates ſtand open, & the heavens ſhall
 receive you all, and ſo ſhall you be ever with the
 Lord. *m* *1 Theſ. 4. 27.*

And now will I rejoyce over you with ſinging, and reſt
 in my love; and heaven ſhall ring with joyes and acclama-
 tions, becauſe I have received you ſafe and ſound, *Luke*
1. 20, 23, 25, 27.

And in that day you ſhall know that I am a Rewarder of
 them that diligently ſeek me; *p* and that *p* Heb. 11.6. *q* Mat
 I did record your words, *q* and bottle *3. 16. r Pſa. 56. 8*
 your tears, and tell your wanderings, *f* *f* Mat. 10.42. *Bleſ-*
 and keep an account. even to a cup of *ſed Eternity. t 1*
 cold water, of whatever you ſaid or did *Cot. 15.58. u Dan.*
 for my Name. *f*. You ſhall ſurely find, *12. 1, 3 Rev. 3. 12.*
 that nothing is loſt : but you ſhall have *Luk. 16.26. Glori-*
 full meaſure preſſed down and running over, thouſands
 of years in Paradife, for the leaſt good thought, and
 thouſand thouſands for the leaſt good word : and then
 the reckoning ſhall begin again, till all Arithmerick be
 non-pluſt. For you ſhall be ſwallowed up in a bleſſed E-
 ternity, and the doors of heaven ſhall be ſhut upon you,
 and there ſhall be no more going out. *ous Company.*

The glorious Quire of mine holy Angels, the goodly Fellowship of my blessed Prophets, the happy Society of Triumphant Apostles, the Royal Hosts of Victorious Martyrs, these shall be your companions for ever. *»* And you shall come in white Robes, with palms in your hands, every one having the Harpes of God, and Golden Vials full of Odours, and shall cast your Crowns before me, and

strike in with the multitude of the heavenly Hosts, glorifying God, and saying, *»* Mat. 8. 11. 12. Heb 12. 22, 23. *x* **Hallelujah**; the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. *x* Blessing, honour, glory and power; be unto him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. *y*

In short *I* will make you equal to the *z* Angels *z* of God, and you shall be the everlasting Trumpets of my praise. *a* *z* Luke 20. 36. *a* *z* Rev. 7. 10, 11, 12. *b* Psalm 36. 8. *c* You shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of my house, and *I* will make you drink of the Rivers of my pleasures. *d* *z* Elay. 60. 15. *Beati- fical Vision.* *d* *z* Joh. 3. 12. *e* *z* 1 Cor. 13. 12. *f* *z* Psal. 17. 15. *b* You shall be an eternal excellency, *c* *z* Rom. 9. 23. *z* and if God can die, and Eternity run out, then, and not else, shall your joyes expire. For you shall see me, as *I* am, and know me, as you are known; *e* and shall behold my face in righteousness, and be satisfied with my likeness. *f* And you shall be the Vessels of my glory, whose blessed use shall be to receive the overflowings of my goodness, and to have mine infinite love and glory poured out into you brimfull; and running over for evermore. *g*

And blessed is he that hath believed for there shall be a performance of the things that have been told him, *Luk.* 1. 45. The Lord hath spoke it, you shall see my face; and my Name shall be written in your fore-heads; and you shall no more need the Sun, nor the Moon, for the Lord God shall give you light, and you shall reign for ever and ever, *Rev.* 22. 3, 4, 5.

And

And as I give my self to you for your God, and all things with my self; so I take you for my Covenant-people, & you shall be mine in the day when I make up my Jewels, saith the Lord of Hosts; and I will spare you as a man spareth his own Son that serveth him. / The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, Surely they are my children. *m*

I do not only require you to be mine, if you would have me to be for you; but I do promise to make you mine, and to work in you the conditions which I require of you. I will circumcise your hearts to love me. *o* I will take out the heart of stone. *p* My Laws will I write within you. *q*

Yet you must know that I will be sought unto for these things, *r* and as ever you expect to partake of the Mercies; I charge you to lie at the pool, & wait for my Spirit, & be diligent in the use of the means. *f*

I am content to abate the rigor of the old terms, *t* I shall not stand upon satisfaction, *u* I have received a ranfome, and do only Expect your acceptance. *w* I shall not insist upon perfection *x* Walk before me, and be upright, and sincerity shall carry the Crown. *y* Yea, both the faith and obedience that I require of you, are mine own gifts. *z*

I require you to accept my Son by believing but I will give you an hand to take him, *a* and to submit to and obey him: but I must and will guide your hand to write after him, and cause you to walk in my statutes. *b* I will take you by the armes and teach you to go: I will order your steps. *d* Yea, those things will I accept of you, as the conditions of life, which, viewed in the strictness of my Justice, would deserve eternal death. *e* Grace! Grace! Amen,

He taketh us for his people. & Hab. 8. 10. Esay 43. 1. Mal. 3. 17. m Psa. 87. 6.

n Lev. 20. 26. Eze. 36. 28. o Deut. 30. 6. p Ezek. 36. 26. q Jer. 31. 33.

r Eze 36. 37. f Pro. 2. 3, 4, 5. & 8. 38. Luk. 11. 13.

t Rom. 4. 6. u Lu. 7. 42. w Rev. 22. 17. x Tim. 2. 6. y 1 Jo. 1. 8, 9. y Pro. 11. 20 Gen. 17. 1. Psa. 97 11. z Eph. 2. 8.

a Phil. 1. 29. Joh. 6. 65. b Ezek. 36. 27. c Hos. 11. 3. 4. d Ps. 37. 23, 31. e Eph. 3. 8. with 1 Thes. 3. 10. Heb. 5. 9. with Eccles. 7. 20.

The voice of the
Redeemed.

A Men, Hallelajah. Be it to thy servants according to thy word. But who are we, and what is our fathers House, that thou hast brought us hitherto? And now, O Lord God, what shall thy servants say unto thee? for we are silenced with Wonder, and must sit down in Astonishment, for we cannot utter the least tittle of thy praises: What meaneth the highth of this strange love? And whence is this unto us, that the Lord of Heaven and Earth should condescend to enter into Covenant with Dust, and take into his bosome the viperous Brood, that have so often spit their venom in his face? We are not worthy to be as the Handmaids, to wash the feet of the servant of our Lord: How much less to be thy Sons and Heirs, and to be made partakers of all these blessed Liberties and Priviledges, which thou hast settled upon us? But for thy goodness sake, and according to thine own heart hast thou done all these great things. Even so Father because it seemed good in thy sight.

Wherefore thou art great, O God, for there is none like thee; neither is there any God besides thee, 1 Sam. 7. 18. to the end. And what nation on earth is like thy people, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a Name, and to do for them great things and terrible? For thou hast confirmed them to thy self, to be a people unto thee for ever, and thou Lord art become their God,

Wonder, O Heavens, and be moved, O Earth, at this great thing! Rev. 21. 4. For behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. Be astonished and ravished with wonder, for the infinite breach is made up; the Offender is received, and God and Man reconciled and a Covenant of Peace entered, and Heaved and Earth are all agreed upon the terms, and have struck their hands, & sealed the Indentures. O happy Conclusion! O blessed Conjunction!

junction! Shall the Stars dwell with the Dust? Or the wide distant Poles be brought to mutual embraces and cohabitation?

But here the distance of the terms is infinitely greater. Rejoyce O Angels, shout O Seraphim. O all ye Friends of the Bridegroom, prepare an Epithalamium, be ready with the Marriage-Song. Lo, here is the wonder of wonders: For Jehovah hath betrothed himself for ever to his hopeless Captives, and owns the Marriage before all the world, and is become one with us, and we with him. He hath bequeathed to us the precious things of Heaven above and the precious things of the Earth beneath, with the fulness thereof, and hath kept back nothing from us.

And now, O Lord, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servants, and hast left us nothing to ask at thy hands, but what thou hast already freely granted. Only the word which thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said, and let thy Name be magnified for ever, saying, The Lord of Hosts, he is the God of Israel.

Amen.

Hallelujah.

SOLILOQUIE,

Representing

*The Believers triumph in Gods Covenant :
and the various Conflicts and glorious
Conquests of Faith over Unbelief. By the
same Author.*

CHAP XVIII.

*The Soul taketh
hold on Gods Co-
venant.*

YE A, Hath God said [*I will be a God unto thee ?*] Is it true indeed ? Will the Lord be mine ? Will he lay aside the controversie, and conclude a Peace ? Will he receive the Rebel to mercy, and open his doors to his Prodigal ? I will surely go unto my Father, I will take unto me words, and bow my self before his Footstool, and say, *O Lord, I have heard thy words, and do here lay hold on thy Covenant, Isa. 56. 4.* I accept the kindness of God, and will adventure my self upon thy fidelity, and trust my whole happiness here and hereafter upon these thy promises.

Farewell deceitful world, get thee under my feet. Too long have I feared thy vain threats ; too long have I been deluded with thy flattering promises. Canst thou promise me or deny me such things as God hath covenanted to give me ? I know thou canst not, and therefore I renounce thee for ever from being the Object of my Faith or Fear. No longer will I lean to this

rotten Reed, no longer will I trust to this broken Idol;
 Avoid Satan with thy tempting baits. In vain dost thou
 dress the Harlot in her Paint and bravery; and tell me,
ALL THIS WILL I GIVE THEE, *Mat. 4. 8, 9.*
 Canst thou shew me such a Crown, such a Kingdome
 as God hath promised to settle upon me? Or that which
 will ballance the loss of an infinite God, who here gives
 himself unto me? Away deceitful Lusts and Pleasures,
 get you hence; I have enough in Christ and his Pro-
 mises, to give my Soul full content; these have I lodged
 in my heart, and there is no longer room for such Guests
 as you, Never shall you have quiet entertainment more
 within these doors.

Thou God of truth, I here take thee at thy word,
 thou requirest but my acceptance and consent, and
 here thou hast it. Good is the word of the Lord which he
 hath spoken, and as my Lord hath said, so will thy ser-
 vant do. My soul taketh hold of thy Promises. These
 have I taken as my heritage for ever. Let others carry
 the Preferments and Possessions of this World; it shall
 be enough to me, to be an heir of thy Promises.

O happy Soul, how rich art thou! *She maketh her*
 What a Booty have I gotten! It is all *boast in God.*
 mine own. I have the promises of this Life, and of that
 which is to come. Oh what can I wish more! How full
 a Charter is here! Now my doubting Soul may boldly
 and believingly say with *Thomas, my Lord, and my God!*
1 Tim. 4. 8. What need we any further witness? We
 have heard his words, He hath sworn by his Holiness,
 that his decree may not be changed; and hath signed it
 with his own Signet.

Rejoyce ye Heavens, strike up ye Celestial Quires,
 Help Heaven and Earth: Sing unto the Lord, O ye
 Saints of his. Bless the Lord, O my Soul. On had I the
 tongue

tongue of Men and Angells, all were too little for my single turn. Had *I* as many tongues as hairs, the whole Quire were not sufficient to utter my Creators praises.

My Beloved is mine, and I am his, Cant. 2. 16. The Grant is clear, and my claim is firm. Who durst deny it, when God himself doth own it? Is it an hard adventure to speak after Christ himself? Why, this is the Message that he hath sent me, I ascend to my Father, and your Father; my God, and your God, *John 20. 17.* He hath put words into my mouth, and bid me to say,
OUR FATHER.

I believe, Lord help mine unbelief. O my God, and my Father, I accept thee with all humble thankfulness, and am bold to take hold of thee. O my King, and my God, I subject my soul, and all its powers to thee. O my Glory, in thee will I boast all the day. Oh my Rock, on thee will I build all my confidence and my hopes. O staff of my life, and strength of my heart; the life of my joyes, and joy of my life, I will sit and sing under thy shadow, and glory in thy holy Name. *Cant. 2. 3.*

O my Soul, arise and take possession. Inherit thy blessedness, and cast up thy riches. Thine is the Kingdom, thine is the glory, and thine is the victory. The whole Trinity is thine. All the Persons in the Godhead, all the Attributes in the Godhead are thine. And behold here is the Evidence, and these are the Writings, by which all is made sure to thee for ever.

Psal. 116. 7. Psal. 136. 6. She quelleth Discontent, & reasoneth down unbelief in Sequentiis.

And now, *Return to thy rest, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee:* Say if thy Lines be not fallen to thee in a pleasant place, and if this be not a goodly Heritage. Oh Blasphemous Discontent! How absurd and unreasonable an evil art thou, whom all the fulness of the Godhead

head cannot satisfie, because thou art denyed in a petty comfort, or crost in thy vain expectations from the World? O most unthankful soul, shall not a Trinity content thee? Shall not all-sufficiency suffice thee? Silence you murmuring thoughts for ever, I have enough, I abound, and am full. Infiniteness and Eternity is mine, and what more can I ask?

But methinks I feel some secret Damps upon my joy, & when I would soar aloft, and triumph in the riches of my portion, a secret diffidence plucks me back, as the string doth the Bird, and Unbelief whispers in mine ear, *Sure this is too good to be true.*

The Assaults of unbelief. 1. It questions the truth of the Promise.

But who art thou that disputest against God? The Lord hath spoken it, and shall not I believe him? Will he be angry, if I give my assent, and speak it confidently upon the credit of his word?

The Triumph of Faith in the certainty of Gods truth.

Oh my Lord, suffer me to spread the writing before thee. Hast not thou said, Thy Maker is thy Husband, *Isa. 54. 5.* I will betroth thee unto me? *Hos. 2. 19.* Thou shalt call me, My Father? *Jer. 3. 19.* I pray thee, O Lord, was not this thy saying, I am God, even thy God? *2 Cor. 6. 18.* I will be a Father unto you, and ye my Sons and Daughters? Why then should I doubt? is not the truth of the living God sure footing for my faith?

Silence then O quarrelling unbelief. I know in whom I have believed, *Isa. 31. 3.* Not in friends, though numerous and potent; for they are men, and not God, *Prov. 23. 5.* Not in Riches, for they make themselves wings. Not in Princes, for their breath is in their Nostrils, *Psal. 146. 3, 4.* But let God be true, and every man a liar. In God have I put my trust, in his word do I hope. O sure Word! Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but not one jot nor tittle of this, *Mat. 7. 25. 2 Tim. 2. 19.* I have not

built upon the sand of mortality. Let the rain descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow, nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure. His everlasting Counsel, and everlasting Covenant are my stay. I am built upon his promises, and let Hell and Earth do their worst to blow up this foundation.

Now shall my Faith triumph, and my heart be glad, and my glory rejoyce, *1 Kings* 18. 39. I will shout with the exulting Multitude. The Lord he is the God, *Heb.* 11. 16. and he is not ashamed to be called, My God. He is not ashamed of my Rags, nor Poverty, of my Parentage, nor Pedegree; and since his infinite condescension will own me, will he take it ill if I own him? Though I have nothing of my own to glory in, *1 Cor.* 1. 29. 31. (unless I should glory in my shame) yet I will glory in the Lord, and bless my self in him.

For who is like unto the God of *Jeshurun*? *Deut.* 33. 26. Bring forth your Gods, O ye Nations. Lift up your eyes, and behold, who hath created all these things? Can any do for their favourites, as the Lord can? Or if he be angry, who is that God that shall deliver out of his hands? will you set *Dagon* before the Ark? Or shall Mammon contend with the Holy One! O ambitious *Haman*, where is now thine Idol-honour? O rich glutton, that madest a God of pleasure, where is now the God whom thou hast served? O sensual worldling, that knewest not where nor how to bestow thy Goods; Do riches profit thee? Could Mammon save thee? Deceived Souls! Go now to the Gods that you have chosen. Alas, they cannot for ever administer a drop of water to cool your tongues.

But the Portion of *Jacob* is not like them, *Fer.* 10. 16. From everlasting to everlasting he is God, *Psal.* 90. 2. His power is my confidence, his goodness is my maintenance, his Truth is my shield and my buckler.

But my clamorous Unbelief hath many wiles, and afresh assaults me with the difficulty of the things promised, and labours to non-plus, and confound me with their amazing greatness.

2. It confounds the Soul with amazing greatness and difficulty of the things.

But why should I stagger at the promise through unbelief, robbing at once my Master of his glory, and my soul of her comfort? It is my great sin to doubt and dispute, and yet shall I be afraid to believe? O my Soul, it is the highest honour thou canst put upon thy Lord, to believe against difficulties, and to look for, and reckon upon great things and wonderful, passing all created power, and humane faith.

The Triumph of Faith in Gods Omnipotency and Veracity.

Let not the greatness, nor the strangeness of the benefits bequeathed unto thee, put thee to a stand. It is with a God thou hast to do, and therefore thou must not look for little things; that were to darken the glory of his munificence, and the infiniteness of his power and goodness. Knowest thou not, that it is his design to make his Name glorious; and to make thee know he is able to do for thee above all thou canst ask or think? Surely they cannot be any small or ordinary things that shall be done for thee, when the Lord shall shew in thee what a God can do, and shall carry thee in triumph before the world, and make proclamation before thee, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the Lord delighteth to honour. What wonder if thou canst not comprehend these things? if they exceed all thy apprehensions and conceptions? This is a good Argument for thy Faith: For this is that which the Lord hath said, That it hath not entred into the heart of man, to conceive what things he hath prepared for them that love him. Now if thou couldest conceive and comprehend them, how should this word be made good? It is enough

for thee, that the Lord hath spoken it. *Is not the word nigh thee? Hath God said, I will receive you? You shall be Kings and Priests unto God, and inherit all things; and shall sit on Thrones, and judge Angels, and be ever with the Lord, and shall I dare to say him Nay? Unreasonable Unbelief! What never satisfied? Still contradicting and blaspheming? False whisperer, no more of thy tales. I believe in God, that it shall be as he hath told me. Acts 27. 25.*

And now thanks be to God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ, *2 Cor. 2. 14.* therefore my lips shall praise thee, and my soul which thou hast redeemed. *Psal. 71. 23.* For thou hast made me glad through thy Word, and I will triumph in the works of thy hands, *Psal. 92. 4.* I will praise the Lord whilst I live, I will sing praises to my God, whilst I have any being, *Psal. 104. 33.*

Oh my soul, if thou couldest wear out thy fingers upon the Harp, and wear thy tongue to the roots, thou couldst yet never sufficiently praise thy Redeemer.

O mine Enemies, where is now your confidence, and where is your Armour, wherein you trusted? I will set Christ alone against all your multitudes, and all the powers, and malice, and policy, wherewith they are armed. The field is already won, and the Captain of our salvation returned, with the spoils of his Enemies, having made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in his Cross, *Col. 2. 15.* And thanks be to God, who hath given us the Victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ, *1 Cor. 1. 15. 57.*

Of whom then should I be afraid, Behold, he is near that justifieth me, who shall plead with me?

O ye Powers of Hell! you are but chained Captives, and we have a sure Word, that the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against us, *Mat. 16. 18.* Though the
World

World be in Arms against us, and the Devil in the head of them as their Champion; yet *who is the uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defie the Armies of the living God?* 1 Sam. 17. 45, 46, 47. Behold I come out to thee, as the Stripling against Goliath; not with sword and with spear, but in the Name of the Lord of Hosts, in whose strength I am more then a Conquerour.

O Grave, where is now thy Victory? Christ is risen, and hath broken up thy prison, and rolled away the stone, so that all thy prisoners have made an escape. *Rejoyce not against me, O mine Enemy; though I fall, I shall rise again; though I lye in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me,* Mic. 7. 8. Enlarge not thy desires O Tophet, but shut up thy flaming mouth; *for there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus,* Rom. 8. 1.

O deceitful World, thou art already overcome, John 16. 33. and the conquered Enemy is become my servant, 1 Cor. 3. 22. and I am fed with the honey taken out of the carcase of the slain Lyon. I fear not thy threats, nor the enchantments of thy Syren Song; *being kept by the Power of God, through a victorious Faith, unto salvation,* 1 Pet. 1. 5. 1 John 5. 4.

O my sins; you are already buried, never to have any Resurrection, and the *remembrance of you shall be no more,* Heb. 8. 12. I see my sins nailed to the Cross, and their dominion is taken away, though their lives be prolonged yet for a little season. *Awake therefore O my glory; awake Psaltery and Harp, and meet the deliverer with triumph; for his right hand, and his holy arm have gotten us the victory,* Ps. 1. 98. 1, 2. and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Yet methinks my unworthiness flies in my face, and I hear my caviling unbelief thus upbraiding me, and crying

3. It upbraids
the trembling
Soul with its
unworthiness.

out,

out; O proud Presumption! That thou that art conscious to thy self of thy great unworthiness, shouldest pretend a claim to God and glory! Shall daring dust think to share with the Almighty, and say of his endless perfections, They are of my right? Bold sinner, stand off, and tremble at thy presumptuous arrogance.

Faith subscribesthe Charge, and triumphs in Gods free Grace.

O my God, I lay my hand upon my mouth. I confess the charge of mine unworthiness. My guilt and shame is such as I cannot cover, but thou canst, and dost. Thou hast cast a Mantle upon my nakedness, and hast promised my transgressions shall not be mentioned, and that thou wilt multiply pardons. And shall I take up what thou hast buried, and then affright my self with the Ghosts that infidelity hath raised? Is it presumption to take the Pardon that thou dost offer? or to receive and claim thee as mine when it is but what thou hast promised. I durst not have pretended a title, but upon thy grant. I should have thought it Diabolical pride, to have pleaded an interest in thee, and claimed kindred to thee, but that thou hast shewed me the way.

And thou, my soul, art thou ignorant of Gods great design? Knowest thou not, that it is his purpose to glorifie Free-Grace? And how should Grace appear to be Grace indeed, were there any worthiness in the subject. Thine unworthiness is but a soil to set off the beauty and riches of free grace and mercy.

4. It questions the Believers Title to Gods Grace, and interest in the promise.

But I cannot shake off this bryar: Alas, what a cavilling Sophister is Unbelief! And will never be answered! Now is it ready to tell me, what if the promise should be a sure Foundation? Yet thou mayest not build upon another mans ground. What though the Grace and mer-
cies

cies of God are infinite ; yet dogs may not catch at the Childrens bread. Thou hast no right nor title to the Promise, therefore cease thy pretended claim.

But, O my Soul, wherefore shouldst thou doubt ? Whose Image and Superscription is this ? Dost thou not bear upon thee the marks of the Lord Jesus ? I have given up my name to him, and *taken hold of his Covenant*, Esay 56. 4. and therefore may claim an interest.

The triumph of Faith in the clearness of the Believers Evidences.

I have accepted the matter, and closed with the Mediator, and subscribed to the conditions of the Covenant, and therefore cannot question but it is mine.

The Lord hath offered to be my God, and I have took hold of his offer ; I have taken him as God, and given him the Supremacy. O my soul, look round about thee, in Heaven and in Earth ; *is there any thou dost esteem or value in comparison of God ?* Psal. 73. 25, 26. *Is there any thou dost love like him, or take that content, or felicity in, that thou dost in him ? Are not thy chief desires and designs to glorifie and enjoy him ?*

Thou canst not deny, but it is truly thus : I am sure nothing but God will content me. I am never so well in all the world, as in his company. My Soul, seeketh him above all, and rests in him alone, as my satisfactory portion. He offereth to take me as one of his people, and I have resigned my self accordingly to him as his, and have put both my inward and outward man under his Government, and given up all to his dispose, and am resolved to be content with him, as my All-sufficient happiness.

Phil. 3. 8. Phil. 1. 20. Psal. 86. 8. & 84. 1, 2, 3. Psal. 27. 4. and 119. 57. Psal. 119 38. 2 Cor. 5. Afts 24. 16. with Rom. 6. 19. Luke 14. 33. Psal. 16. 5. 6. John 1. 12.

Besides, I have taken him in his own way through Christ, whom he hath tendered to me as my Head and Husband, and I have accordingly, solemnly, and deliberately

berately taken him. O my soul, dost thou not know thy
 ostendebates? *Luke 14.26. to the end.* Hast thou not put
 Christ, and and all the world, into the ballance? Hast
 thou not cast up the cost, and reckoned upon the Cross,
 and willingly put thy neck under Christs yoa^k, *Mat. 11.*
29. and ventured thy salvation upon Christ alone, *Phil.*
3. 9, and trusted him with all thy happiness, and all thy
 hopes? *2 Tim. 1. 12.* Hast thou not over and over resol-
 ved to take him with what comes; and that he shall be
 enough, though in the loss of all things? *1 Cor. 1. 20.*
 Thou canst not but know, that these have been the trans-
 actions between Christ and thee, and therefore he is
 thine, and all the Promises. Yea and *Amen* to thee
 through him.

And for the terms of the Covenant. I love and like
 them; my Soul imbraceth them; neither do I desire to
 be saved in any other way, than by *repentance towards*
God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, Acts 20.21.
 and sincere obedience to his Gospel, *Rom. 2. 7.*

I am willing to go out of my flesh, and do look unto
 Jesus for righteousness and strength, and trust my salva-
 tion wholly in this bottome. I am con-
Phil. 3.3. to the 10. tent to deal upon trust, and venture
2 Cor. 5. 7. 2 Cor. all in hopes of what is to come, and to
4.18. 1 Thes. 1.9, carry till the next world for my pre-
10. Tit. 2.13. Heb. ferment. I am willing to wait till the
10.34. and 11.35. coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and have laid up my
 happiness on the other side of the Grave.

And though my sins be many, yet I should belye mine
 own knowledge, If I should say they were not my con-
 stant trouble and burden, and the enemies against which
Rom. 7. 24. Gal. 5. I daily watch, and with whom my soul
17. Psal. 39.1. and hath no peace. Mine own heart know-
17. 3. eth that I hate them, and desire and
 endeavour their utter destruction, and do resolve against
 them all, and am willing to use all Gods means (that I
 know)

know) to mortifie them. 'Tis too true that I often fall, and fail; yet my Conscience beareth me witness, that I confesse and bewail it, and do not ordinarily and deliberately allow my self in any sin whatsoever against my knowledge. And though my obedience be miserably lame, yet O Lord, thou knowest, that I have respect unto all thy Commandments, and to strive to come up to what thou requirest. The Holy Ghost is witness, and my Conscience also, that *I first seek the Kingdom of God, & the righteousness thereof, Mat. 6. 33.* & that it is my chief care to please God, and keep from sin. Speak O my Soul, is not holiness thy design? Dost thou not thirst for it, and follow after it? Dost thou not, in thy settled choice, prefer the holy wayes of God before all the pleasures, and delights of sin? Thou knowest it is thus, and therefore no more disputing; thou hast sincerely taken hold of Gods Covenant, and without controversy it must be thine.

O my God, I see thou hast been at work with my soul, I find the prints, I see the footsteps. Surely this is the finger of God. *I am thy servant, O Lord, truly I am thy servant, Psal. 116. 16.* and my soul hath said unto the Lord, *Thou art my Lord, Psal. 116. 2.* It must be so. Wouldst thou ever set thy mark upon anothers goods? Or shall God disown his own workmanship? My Name is written in heaven. Thou hast written thy Name upon my heart, and therefore I cannot question but thou hast my Name on thine heart. I have chosen thee, O Lord, as my happiness and heritage, and therefore I am sure thou hast chosen me, for I could not have loved thee, except *thou hadst loved me first, 1 John 4. 19.* O my Lord, discern I pray thee, whose are these, the Signet, the Bracelets, and the Staff! I know thou wilt acknowledge them.

And

*Psal. 119. 101. 104.
Rom. 7. 15, 16. &c.
1 Cor. 9. 26, 27. 1
John 1. 9. Rom. 6.
16. Psal. 119. 6. Psal.
119. 5. 30. 173. 2.
Cor. 5. 9. Psal. 18.
23. and 19. 13. and
119. 133. Mat. 5.
6. Psal. 119. 14, 15,
16. 111, 112.*

And now blessed be God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who of his abundant mercy, hath begotten me again to a lively hope.

Faith makes its claim to all the Benefits of the Covenant, and stirs up the Soul to joy and thankfulness, in sequenti.

And thou, my soul, believe and wait, look through the window, and cry through the lattice, and rejoyce in the hope of the glory of God. *The vision is for an appointed time, wait for it. It will come in the end, and will not tarry,* Hab. 2. 3. *Behold the Husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth,* Jam. 5. 7. Be thou also patient. He hath long patience, and wait not thou have a little patience? He for the fruits of the earth, but thou for the joys of Heaven; He upon meer probabilities, but thou upon infallible certainties. He for a crop of Corn, but thou for a Crown of Glory. Were he but sure that every Corn would bear a Crown, how plentifully would he sow, how joyfully would he wait? Why such is thy harvest. As sure as the Summers delights do follow the Winters severities; as sure as the wish-for Harvest doth follow the toilsome and costly Seeds time, so sure shall thy Lord return, *and bring thy reward with him,* Rev. 22. 12. Therefore my soul, love and long for the approaching Jubile, and wait all the dayes of my appointed time, until my change shall come.

O blessed state that my Lord hath translated me into! O happy change that he hath made: I was a stranger, and he took me in, and made me an heir; and preferred me from the Dunghil to the Throne, and from a hewer of wood, and drawer of water, to attend his Court, and know his Counsels, and do his pleasure. Happy am I that ever I was born to partake of this endless dignity.

O my Lord, it is no little thing thou hast given me in hand. Heb. 12. 22, 23, 24. *I am already come to Mount Zion, and the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and to innumerable company of Angels, to the ge-*

nerals

neral Assembly and Church of the First-born, and to God the Judge of all, and unto the spirits of just men made perfect, and unto Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and unto the Blood of sprinkling. My heart reviveth, as Jacobs, when I behold the Tokens which thou hast sent me, the Spirit of Adoption, Gal. 4. 6. the pardon of my sins, Luke 5. 20. My patent for Heaven, the chain of thy Graces, the Son of thy Bosome, and the New Testament in his Blood, and the letters of his love. My Lord hath said, that he will love me, and manifest himself unto me; and that the Father will love me, and both will come unto me, and make their abode in me. But is it true indeed? Will the Lord dwell on earth? Or if he will, shall so foul a Stable, so unclean a Stye, as my heart hath been, shall this be the place that the Lord of Life will take up his lodging, and keep his Court in? Will he indeed come with all his Train of Graces, and live and walk in me? how can all these things be? but he hath said it, and I do, and I will believe it.

Yet all this is but the earnest of what is come. *Oh how great is thy goodness laid up for them that fear thee?* P^sal. 31. 19. Yet a little while, and my warfare shall be accomplished, and the Heavens must receive me, till the time of the restitution of all things. It is but for a short term that I shall dwell in this dirty flesh, in an earthen Tabernacle, 2 Pet. 1. 14. My Lord hath shewed me, that where he is, there shall his servant be, Joh. 12. 26. Now the living is tyed to the dead; and my soul is a Stage of strife, and a field of war. But 'tis but a little moment, and that which is perfect shall come, 1 Cor. 13. 10. Perfect holiness, and perfect peace; eternal Serenity, and a Serene Eternity.

O my sins, I am going where you cannot come; where no unclean thing shall enter, Rev. 21. 27. Nor any thing that

that defileth. Methinks I see all my afflictions and temptations, all mine infirmities and corruptions falling off me, as *Elijah's* Mantle at his translation.

○ my soul, dost thou not see the Chariots of fire, and the Horses of fire, come to take thee up ? Be thou as poor as *Lazarus*, *Luke* 16. 22. yet God will not disdain to send a party of Angels to conduct thee home. How canst thou doubt of ready reception, who hast such a friend in Court, who will lead thee with boldness into his Fathers presence ? If there were joy in *Pharaoh's* Court, when it was said, *Josephs Brethren are come*, *Gen.* 45. 16. Surely it will be welcome news in Heaven, when it's told Jesus his Brethren are come.

My soul, fear not to enter, though the Lord be cloathed with Terrour and Majesty : For thy Redeemer will procure thee favour, and plead thy right. I am sure of welcome, for the Father himself loveth me, *John* 16. 27. I have tasted and tryed his love ; and when I had played the wicked Prodigal, *Luke* 15. yet he despised not my Rags, but fell on my neck, and kissed me, and Heaven it self made merry over me. Much more will he receive me gladly, and let out his loves upon me, when presented to him by his Son, in his perfect likeness, as a fit object for his everlasting delight. Fear not, O my soul, as if thou wert going to a strange place. Why Heaven is thy Country, and thy home : Wilt thou doubt of leave, or fear of welcome, when it is thine own home ? Why, my soul, thou wast born from above, and here is thy kindred, and thy Fathers house, and therefore thou shalt surely be admitted. And then shall I see the glorious preparations of eternal Love, and the blissful Mansions of the heavenly Inhabitants.

Doubtless

Doubtless it shall be thus. These are not sick mens dreams, or Childrens hopes. The living God cannot deceive me : and may not I certainly promise my self, what the Lord hath promised me? I will sooner think that all my senses are deluded, and what I see, and feel, and taste, is but a fancy, than think that the living God will deceive me, or that his unchangeable Covenant will fail. Now I am a Son of God, but it doth not yet appear what I shall be. But this I know, I shall be like him, and see him as he is, 1 *John* 3. 2.

I know it shall be thus. Why, what security should I ask of God, he hath given me all the Assurance in the Word. And though the word of God be enough, yet he willing to shew more abundantly to the Heirs of promise, the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an Oath : that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lye, I might have strong consolation, *Heb.* 6. 17. O unreasonable Unbeleif! what, shall not the Oath of a God put an end to thy strife?

O my God, I am satisfied : it is enough. Now I may be bold without presumption, and boast without pride. And will no more call my duty Arrogance, nor my Faith a Fancy.

O my Soul! There is but a short life betwixt thee and Glory, where holy Angels, and glorified Saints, shall be mine Associates, and Love, and Praise mine only Employment, *Job* 38. 7. Methinks I hear already how the Morning-Stars sing together, and all the Sons of God shout for joy. O that I could come in for one! But it was said unto me, I should rest yet for a little season, but I shall stand in the Lot at the end of the dayes, *Dan.* 12. 13.

It is well Lord, thy word is enough. Thy Bond is as good as ready payment. The Holy Ghost tells me,

me; that life and glory abide me; that look what pay I loose from the body, the same day I shall be landed in *Paradise*. Amen. *Luke* 23. 43. It is as I would have it.

But this is not all; When my body hath slept a short Nap in the dust, Christ will call to it, Come up hither. Ah true Yoke-fellow, it will be hard parting, but welcome meeting. *I* could not leave thee, but to live with

Christ, *Col.* 3. 4. But he will raise thee to a glorious Temple; and when he shall appear; will bring me with himself in glory; and then *I* shall re-enter thee as a Royal Mansion, wherein I shall abide with the Lord for ever. For as we have served our Redeemer together, so we must be glorified together with him. And when the Lord hath married us both together again, then will he marry us both unto himself. *For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the last day over the Earth. And though after my skin, Worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God. Whom I shall see for my self, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my Reins are consumed within me.* My Lord hath already told me how it shall be; he hath set down the time, and shewed me the Robes of immortality, and the Crown of Life, that I must put on; and the Throne of Glory, and the Seat of Judgment, that I must sit in. He hath told me the manner, in which I shall be presented to him, and espoused by him. He hath told me where he will set me, and what he will say to me; and how he will acknowledge my mean services, and remember what *I* have forgotten, *Math.* 25. 35, 37. How he will praise the works that *I* have been ashamed of, and reward me openly, for what *I* have buried in secrecy, *Math.* 6. 4. and not forget the poorest Alms that *I* have given for his Name. Then will he confess me before his Father,
and

and before the Angels of God. Thus saith the true and faithful witness, and we know that his Testimony is true.

Ah my Soul, see that thou make not God a Liar. *1 John. 5. 10.*

O my God, I have beleived thy report, and do look for all these things, according to thy promise. I know thou intendest me but for a very little while in this lower Region. This world is but the house of my Pilgrimage, and my soul now is but like a Bird in the shell: but when the shell is cracked, then shall she take wings like a Dove, and soe aloft to thee, and flee away, and be at rest.

Yet I doubt not thy care for my despicable dust, *Job 6. 39.* I know that nothing will be lost; I know not where they will lay me: but thy wakeful eye observeth, and will not be to seek at what door to knock, nor at what grave to call for me. I beleive and am sure that I shall come a glorious peice out of thy hands, fair as the Moon, cleane as the Sun, crowned with honour and glory. And when my absolution is read, and sentence past upon the world, then must I be taken up to dwell with thee.

Let not my Lord be angry, that thy dust and ashes speaketh thus unto thee. Thou Lord hast raised my expectations, and hast made me to look for all these great things from thee. In vain hast thou written all these things unto me, if I should not beleive them; and a distrustful diffidence would put high dishonour upon thy truth.

O Lord, it repenteth me, it repenteth me of my jealousies, and my doubtful thoughts about thee. I know thou lovest an humble confidence, and delightest in nothing more than to see thy Children trust thee. I

know the building of my hopes lies not an hairs breadth over the foundation of thy Promises, yea, 'tis sure, my expectations are infinitely short of what I shall finde.

O my God, my heart trusteth safely in thee, and I here set to my seal, that thou art true; *Job. 3. 33.* Christ is my Bottome in which I venture, *Eph. 2. 20.* and the Corner stone on which I build, *Mark. 7. 25.* and therefore my Fraught is ensured, and my Building shall challenge the winds and floods, *Psal. 39. 7.*

And now, O Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee. O my blessedness, let me enjoy thee. O my life, let me possess. O desire of mine eyes, let me see thy face and hear thy voice? for thy voice is sweet, and thy countenance is comly. I ask but what thou hast promised: For thou hast told me, that I shall see God, and thou wilt speak to me mouth to mouth, *Mat. 5. 8.* even apparently, and not in dark speeches, and the similitude of God shall I behold.

So shall my knowledge be perfected, *1 Cor. 13. 9, 10.* and I shall see the inaccessible Light, and my tender eye shall not water, nor my sight dazle; but I shall with open face look stedfastly on the Sun of righteousness, and behold his glory. Then shall Faith be turned into Fruition, and Hope into possession, and love shall arise like the full Moon in her brightness, and never wax nor wane more.

O thou God of my hopes, I do look for a new body, and a new Soul; for new Heavens and for a new Earth, according to thy promise; when my whole Soul shall be wholly taken up with thee, and all my affections strained to the highest peg, and all the wheels of my raised powers set in most vigorous and perpetual motion towards thee, still letting in, and still laying out; and thus shall there be an everlasting communication of joy and

and glory from thee, and of love and praise from me.

O my Soul, thou art rich indeed, and increased in Goods. Thou hast no reason to envy the glory nor grandeur of the mightiest on Earth: For their glory shall not descend after them; like sheep shall they be laid in their graves, and death shall feed upon them, and there's an eternal end of all their pomp and excellency. But my Kingdome is an everlasting Kingdome. My Robes shall never wear, my Crown shall never totter, my Throne shall never be vacant, my Bread shall never mould, my Garland shall never wither, my House shall never moulder, my Wine shall never sower, but everlasting joy shall be upon my head, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

O my God, how happy hast thou made me! It is better then I could have wished. Thou hast done all things well. Thou hast settled them for ever. The whole Earth cannot shew any such Heritage or Tenure. The World can state out her possessions but for years, nor can she make a good title for that neither. But mine inheritance is for ever, and none can put me out of possession. The thing is established in heaven; and in the Volume of the Book it is written of me. My Evidence cannot be lost; it is recorded in the Court above, and enrolled in the sacred Leaves of the word, and entred upon the book of my Conscience, and herein I do and will rejoyce.

Now, my Soul, wipe up thine eyes, and go away with *Hannah*, and be no more sad. What though mine House be not so with God, so happy, so prosperous as I could wish; What though they be increased that trouble me, and my temptations and afflictions be like the rolling billows, riding one anothers backs?

hast? Yet shall my soul be as a Rock unmoved, and sit down satisfied in the security and amplitude of my portion. For God hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; and herein is all my salvation, and all my desire.

And now what remaineth, O Lord but that I should spend the remainder of my dayes in loving, praising, and admiring thee? But wherein shall I come before the Lord, or bow my self to the most high God? What shall I give thee, to express my thankfulness, though not to requite thy bounty? Alas my poor little soul! Alas that thou art so little. How narrow are thy capacities! How disproportionate are thy powers! Alas that my voice can reach no higher a note! But shall I do nothing because I cannot do all?

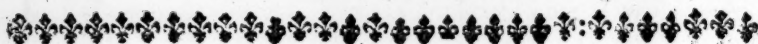
Lord I resign to thee. With the poor widow, I cast my two mites (my soul and body) into thy treasury. All my powers shall love and serve thee. All my members shall be weapons of righteousness for thee. Here is my good will. Behold, my substance is thy stock, mine interest is for thy service. I lay all at thy feet: There thou hast them, they are thine. My Children I enter as thy servants. My Possessions I resign as thy Right. I will call nothing mine but thee. All mine are thine. I can say, My Lord, and my God, and that is enough; I thankfully quit my claim to all things else, I will no more say, My house is mine, or my Estate mine; I my self am not mine own: Yet it is infinitely better for me to be thine, than if I were mine own. This is my happiness, that I can say, My own God, my own Father. And O what a blessed exchange hast thou made with me! to give me thy self, who art an infinite Sum, for my self, who am but an insignificant Cypher.

And now Lord, do thou accept and own my claim; I am not worthy of any thing of thine, much less of thee. But sith I have a deed to shew, I bring thy word in my hand, and am bold to take possession. Dost thou not know this hand? wilt thou not own this name? wilt thou not confirm thine own grant? *It were infidelity to doubt it. I will not disparage the faithfulness of my Lord, nor be afraid to aver, and stand to what he hath said and sworn. Hast thou said, thou art my God, and shall I fear thou art mine enemy? Hast thou told me, Thou art my Father, and shall I stand aloof, as if I were a stranger? I will believe. Lord silence my fears; and as thou hast given me the claim and title of a Child, so give me the confidence of a Child. Let my heart be daily kept alive by thy promises, and with this staff let me pass over Jordan. May these be my undivided Companions and Comforters: When I go, let them lead me; when I sleep, let them keep me; when I awake, let them talk with me. And do thou keep these things for ever, upon the imaginations of the thoughts of the hearts of thy people, and prepare their hearts unto thee. And let the heart of thy Servant be the Ark of thy Testament, wherein the sacred Records of what hath passed between thee and my soul, may for ever be preserved.*

Amen.

Thus far my friend,

So be it.



C H A P. XIX

An Exhortation to sinners.

O Earth, Earth, Earth, hear the word of the Lord. Ye men of this world, ye spirits that are in Prison, held captive to iniquity, under the Prince of this World; in a Covenant with Death, at an agreement with Hell, Without Christ, Aliens from the Common-wealth of *Israel*, strangers from the Covenant of Promise, having no hope, without God in the World; who have said, We will not have this man to rule over us; let us break his bonds asunder, and cast his Cords from us; who are joyned to Idols, have chosen you other Gods, are following after other Lovers; who walk after the course of this world, according to the Prince of the power of the Air, the Spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; having your conversation in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh; and of the mind, and being still as you were by nature, the children of wrath, in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity.

O ye Sons of Death, ye Children of the Night, and of Darkness, Hear, and your souls shall live: to you also is the word of this Salvation sent; even the strangers, and those that are afar off, that will lay hold on the Covenant, and chuse the thing that pleaseth God, these also shall have a Name in his house, even the glorious Name of Sons and Daughters. The Lord hath sent a word into *Jacob*, and it shall light upon *Edom* and *Amalek*, and the uncircumcised *Philistines*, even

as many of them as the Lord our God shall call, *Acts*
2. 39.

Hearken O people, you that are polluted in yone blood, written in the Earth free, among the Dead; come in, let your Covenant with death be made void, and your agreement with Hell be disannulled, strike a League with the Almighty, and your Names also shall be written amongst the Living in *Jerusalem*.

Stand ye before the Lord, come, let us reason together.

Where are you? What is your Portion and Inheritance? Ye are Cursed with a Curse. *Fire and Brimstone, and an horrible Tempest, this shall be the portion of your Cup. Psal. 11. 6.* What are you seeking, whither are you travelling? After a few years of your vanity are over, where must your dwelling be? *Who can dwell with the devouring fire? who can dwell with everlasting burnings?* Look before you, behold that smoking Furnace, that burning Lake, that bottomless Pit that's gaping for you, and at your next step may swallow you up. Escape for your lives; why will ye dye? Turn and live.

Do you beleive the Resurrection from the dead, the Judgment to come, and the invisible World? Is it to the spirit of a man, as to the spirit of a beast? Doth it perish with his carcase? Dyeth a man as a Dog dyeth? dyeth a wise man as a fool dyeth? Fall all things alike to all, just and unjust, good and bad, after this life as well as in it?

Do you believe the Scripture? Are they but a fable? If you hope they are there, are you sure they are? Dare you venture your soul upon it? Whilst the Saints venture on the *Truth*, dare you venture your souls on the *Falshood* of it? dare you stand forth, and say: if this word be not a lye, let me be damned for ever I am content

that the everlasting worm shall gnaw my heart, that the infernal fire shall burn my flesh, and bones, and soul for ever and ever, if it prove not at last a meer forgery and imposture.

Do you beleive the Scriptures to be true indeed? If you do, what do they preach to you? Do they speak any thing, if not this, *That there is another life and death, besides that which is within the ken of mortal eyes; that the other life, and the other death, are eternal; that upon your being found within or without the Covenant of God, hangs your eternal judgment, either for life or death; that whilst you are in a Covenant with death, and in a course of iniquity, you are without the Covenant of God, and can have no benefit by it; that under sin, and out of Covenant; out of Covenant, and out of Christ; out of Christ and under condemnation?*

Are there any things which that word which you profess to believe to be as true, and to stand as sure as Heaven and Earth; are there any things that this speaks more plainly, than these things, and such like? What, and yet secure in a state of sin? Aliens from God, Enemies of all Righteousness, and yet in quiet? Are you resolved to sell eternity for time, life for death, a soul for the pleasures of sin? Is this the choice you have made, and are you resolved to stand to it? Let me have this world, my portion here, my good things here, and then let me be damned in the other world: Let me sin here, and suffer hereafter: Let me laugh here, and lament hereafter: Let me flourish, and prosper, and live at ease, and in honour, and in pleasure, and at liberty here, and let my prison, and my pain, and my anguish, and my plagues be beneath; there let me be torn, let me burn, let me roare, let me dye, so I may be rich, and be merry, and rejoyce a while here: let *time* be my Heaven, and *eternity* be my Hell: speak in earnest

is this your choice ? Or that you may not be put to it to make a *new choice* ; will you take upon you to make a *new Gospel* ? And dividing what God hath joyned together, will you joyn what he hath divided ? Will you write this for Gospel ? *Holiness and Hell Sin and Glory, Christ and the Curse, the Devil and the Crown : Let the wicked hold on his way, and the unrighteous his thoughts, let him still run away from the Lord, and he shall have mercy; and from his God, and he will abundantly pardon ? Strait is the Gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto death, and few there be that find it ; but Broad is the Gate, and wide is the way, that leadeth unto life, and the whole world are going in therat. Blessed are the proud in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdome of heaven, Blessed are they that laugh now, blessed are the froward, the mercilefs, the impatient in heart, the persecutors for righteousness sake ; for great is their reward in Heaven. Within shall be the Doggs, and the Swine, the Whoremongers, the Sorcerers, the Drunkards, the Ruffians, the Blasphemers, the Gallants, the Idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lye : And without shall be the Lambs, and the Doves, the Holy, and the Humble, and the Meek, and the Mercifal, and the Upright in heart, and the Poor in spirit, and Peace-makers, the Persecuted for Righteousness sake, and whosoever loveth truth, and maketh God his trust ; these shall go into everlasting fire, but the ungodly into life eternal.*

Are these the Articles of your Creed ? Is this your Gospel ? If it be, O what is your Heaven ? if it be not if the old Gospel must stand, O where are your souls ? Are your souls lost, and are they not worth the recovery ? *Why will ye dye ? Turn and Live ; Oh when shall it once be.*

As an Ambassador for Christ, to whom is committed the Word of Reconciliation, having hinted to
you

you what's Law, so in the name of the eternal God, I publish to you the everlasting Gospel.

The Lord God having entred into a Covenant of life, with the first *Adam*, for himself and all mankind in him; this Covenant being broken, whereby sin hath entered, and death by sin, and all the world is now become guilty before God; bound over to the vengeance of eternal fire, and under an utter impossibility of recovery, by ought that that Covenant can do, hath out of his abundant grace, made a new Covenant, on which whosoever shall lay hold, shall be delivered out of the state of Death and Wrath, into a state of life and blessedness, *Rom. 8. 3. What the Law could not do, being weak through the flesh, God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh; and with him this gracious grant, that whosoever believeth in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life, Joh. 3. 16.* And this is the Covenant that hath been declared unto you.

This new Covenant is a *Marriage-Covenant*, *Hos. 2. 10. I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea, I will betroth thee to me in righteousness, and in loving kindness, and in mercies.* In it the Lord makes offer, and invites you to accept of an *Husband* and a *Dower*: the Husband is the *Kings son* the Lord Jesus Christ; and with him the *lost Kingdome*, and all that belongs to the Kingdome of God for a *Dower*, Liberty for the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound; riches to the poor, eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, healing to the diseased, and life to the dead.

And whoever among you all, who are persons under the Law, held by the cords of your sins, whose souls are fast bound in fetters of Iron, who are willing that your Covenant with death be made void, and your agreement with Hell be dis-annulled, and will joyn your
selves

selves to the Lord, and be brought within the bonds of this Covenant, all the blessings of this Covenant are made over, and stand sure unto you.

The grant is made, the Deed is drawn and sealed; the Lord hath set to his Seal, come you in; and seal the Counter-part; set to your seal, and the match is made up. Christ, and with him all things are yours, and you are his. Accept and live, refuse and dye for ever,

Come on then, sinner, what sayest thou? Dost thou consent? Dost thou accept? Or as *Laban* to *Rebeckah*, *Wilt thou go with this man?* Let me espouse thee to this one Husband; only let me first tell thee, The matter is solemn, and thou must be serious. 'Tis for life, 'tis for Eternity?

Consider therefore, and let thine heart, lying prostrate before the Almighty, come in and make answer to these demands, which from him, and in his great and dreadful Name I make unto thee.

1. *Wilt thou have Jesus for thy Husband?* Understand before thou answer. The taking of Christ for thine Husband, implies,

- { Intimate Union.
- { Ingenuous Subjection.
- { Total dependance.

1. *Intimate Union*; by chasing and accepting of him for thine, and resigning and giving up thy self to him, for his own; to co-habit and live with him, in the dearest conjugal affection for ever.

2. *Ingenuous Subjection*; by a free and chearful putting thy self under him, as thy Lord, whom thou wilt obey, and be subject to, in all things. The Wife must be subject to her Husband; yet not as a slave by *constraint*, but freely and by *consent*.

3. *Total Dependance*; holding of him as thine head, expecting nothing, owning nothing but what descends

scends upon thee from him. Depending on him for all things, the bearing of thy debts, thy discharge from thy Bonds, and thy whole provision for a livelyhood and maintenance.

Consider then, what sayest thou? Doth thine heart choose, and accept, and resign up it self unto Christ? Dost thou choose him as an *Husband*? Thou canst choose him as a *Refuge*, to hide thee from danger; thou canst choose him as a *Friend*, to help thee in thy need; but dost thou choose him for thine *Husband*? Wilt thou cleave to him, love, honour, and obey him? Dost thou understand his manner, the Law of his House, his Family order and discipline? Dost thou know his Commands and expectations? how holy, how spiritual, how strict, and self-denying, how humble and submissive he looks thy whole carriage should be? wilt thou be at his *finding*? Wilt thou look unto him, and lean upon him for all thou needest? Shall all thy desire be to him, and thy dependance on him? Thou art a *Bondman*, who shall be thy Redemption? Thou art a *Malefactor*, who shall be thy Satisfaction? Thou art a *Lepser*, whence dost look for cleansing? Thou art a *Beggar*, whence dost expect an inheritance? wilt lean upon thy beloved for all! Shall he be thy Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, Redemption, and Inheritance? wilt do him this honor, to trust him for all this; to cast all thy burthens, thy cares, thy fears, thy sins, thy guilt, thy hopes upon him? Canst say, O my God, I have sinned, I have sinned, thy Law have I broken, thy love have I slighted, I have fallen from thee, and run over to thine Enemies, I have fallen under thy displeasure, wrath is provoked, justice hath taken hold of me, my soul is undone? How dreadful is thy controversie with me? And I have nothing to answer but this, My Jesus shall answer for me.

O my Jesus, thou hast wooed and invited sinners unto thee; thou hast sent forth thy Messengers, and thy Word, *into the high ways and hedges*, into the Goals, and Hospitals of the World; among the poor, the blind, and the bound, and the diseased, and those that are in debt, and distress; to take from among them *a Wife for thy bosome*. Behold, thy word hath found among the Captives this wretched Adulteress, my poor Harlot soul, which hath dealt treacherously with thee, and hath followed after other Lovers, hath fallen among Theeves and Robbers, is bruised, wounded, and undone; having prodigally spent and wasted all that *I* had

But Behold, I come at thy word; if thou sayest, I have no pleasure in thee, if thou spit in my face, and spurn me with thy foot, and trample me in the dirt, or send me back to my Prison, and leave me to bear the shame of my Whoredomes, I must be silent and speechless.

But wilt thou receive me? Wilt thou take me into thine house? Wilt thou spread thy skirt over me? Shall I be called by thy Name? wilt thou love me, and be joyned unto me? Wilt thou be surety for thy servant? Wilt thou that my debts be upon thee, my Bonds be upon thee, my wants, my sins, my sorrows, my fears, my plagues, my help, my soul be upon thee? wilt thou Lord, and can I say thee nay? wilt thou take them, and can I refuse to lay them upon thee? I consent, I consent to thee; be thou mine husband, and my helper; love me, discharge me of this guilt, loose me from these fetters, cleanse me from this filthiness, and ask what thou wilt, impose upon me what ever thou pleasest; love thee, honour thee, obey thee? what is my love; what is my obedience, that thou shouldst accept, or I should deny it to thee?

but little that I can do, this heart is so false and so feeble, that I am afraid how I undertake for it, but such as it is, take it to thee, I bestow it wholly upon thee, with this promise, that if thou wilt help me I will love thee, if thou wilt help me I will be subject to thee, and lay up all my hopes and expectations with thee. Now Soul, now that thou knowest what it means, now say, wilt thou have Christ for thy Husband?

2. *Wilt thou take him for better for worse, for richer for poorer?*

Though thy Lord be King, yet his Kingdome is not of this world, He came not to be ministered unto, but minister; he came to serve, and suffer, and all those that will follow him, must suffer with him. He came not to divide lands, and spoils, and crowns, and temporal dignities, and honours amongst his Disciples; but crosses and prisons, and scourges, and wants. Thou wilt joyn thy self to the Lord, but wilt thou take up thy lot with him? Thou wilt live with him, and abide with him; but dost know where he dwells, and what his entertainment is? Sometimes he hath bread, and sometimes he is hungry; sometimes he hath cloathes, and sometimes is naked; sometimes he hath an house, and sometimes he hath none, sometimes he hath friends, and sometimes he hath none; he is sometimes used kindly, and sometimes as courly; sometimes 'tis *Hosanna*, and sometimes *Crucifige*; sometimes he is cried up as a King, sometimes cried out against as a Devil; and as it is with the Master, so will it be with the Schollars; as with the Lord, so with the Disciple; where he is thou must be also. Canst thou say, whither thou goest, I will go with thee; where thou seedest, I will seed with thee; where my Lord dwelleth, if in a tent, if in a cave, if in a dungeon, if in a wilderness, where ever my Lord dwelleth, let me dwell with him? Consider
what

what thou sayest, and be not over hasty. May be thou dost not yet know; what hunger & thirst, and nakedness mean; what the wrath of man, what their reproachings and spittings, and stripes, and bonds mean; may be thou hast thought, this may be far enough off, and may never come upon me; or hast taken up a resolution through incogitancy, not weighing how sharp and how pinching they may be to thee. But suppose thou wert now just come to it; and that thou sawest, that thy first foot Christ-ward, would be the parting point betwixt thee & all that is dear unto thee in the world, that thy first step Heaven-ward would be into the fire, or the water, or into the camp of the *Philistines*, whose faces were all filled with fury against thee. Hast thou yet such a far deeper sense of the eternal sufferings, thou art in danger of; such a settled belief of thy absolute necessity of Christ, to thy escaping these; such an high value of the love of Christ, and the everlasting salvation thou expectest by him, as does over-balance and swallow up the sharpest and the quickest sense thou hast or canst have of the greatest things thou shalt suffer by him? Hast thou cast up all afflictions imaginable, and then put thy soul to it? Now resolve what to do; either this, or no Christ; either this, or no Crown; either this cross, or the curse; either the wrath of man, or the wrath of God; Scorpions and Dragons, and Devils; shrieking, and howling, and gnashing of teeth for ever and ever. Confess Christ, and be confessed by him, suffer with Christ and reign with him; weep with Christ, and rejoyce with him; dye with Christ and live for ever; deny Christ, forsake Christ and perish for ever. Hast thou thus put thy self to it? And after the most solemn debate thou hast had, what is the result? Now tell me, Christ or no Christ. Wilt thou have Christ for better for worse, how dear soever he cost thee.

3. *Wilt thou forsake all others?*

Thou hast three Husbands that lay claim to thee; *Sin, the World, and the Devil*. Wilt thou renounce and be divorc'd from all these? Ther's no compounding betwixt Christ and them, he or they must go.

The renouncing of sin stands.

In the dis-engaging of the heart from it.

In the ingaging of the heart against it.

1. *In the dis-ingaging or loosning of the heart from sin.*

'Tis an hearty willingness to let it go; a willingness to part, is our parting with sin. A breaking the Peace, the cutting off the League betwixt sin and the Soul, when a sinner stands so clear convinc'd of the worth of Christ, of the value of a Soul, of the enmity of Sin against Christ and the Soul, of the unworthiness of sin, with all its pleasures and advantages, to be laid in the balance with Christ, is willing to be rid of it. What is there in it? What can it do for me? How long will it last me? where will it lead me? O the after births of sin: O the rail of these Locusts, the sting, the sting that I see there! Can I want a Christ? Or can I hope that hee'll dwell with such neighbours? Can I bear the loss of my Soul? Or can it escape, if these escape? I see its vain to think of keeping both Christ and Lusts, its vain to think of saving both my sins and my soul; 'tis all one, as to be saved, and to be damn'd; I may as well bring Heaven and Hell together. Well, let them go; henceforth hold thy peace sin, pleade no more with me for entertainment, be a stranger for ever to me, henceforth I know thee no more.

2. *In the ingaging the heart against sin.* When the heart is not only content to let it depart, but gives it a bill of divorce and sends it away. When it can want it, and cannot bear; when it dea's with it, as the *Egyptians* with

with *Israel* ; at first they have only leave given them to be gone, but at length they thrust them out, *Exod. 12. 33. They were urgent upon them, that they might send them out of the land in hast, for they said, we all be but dead men.*

Be gone sin, I am but a dead man if thou abidest with me ; and so it will no longer Court it as a friend, but curse it as an enemy ; fears it, hates it, and is resolved to be its mortal enemy ; and to this end is determined to use all Gods means.

To discover,

To destroy it.

1. To use all Gods means *to discover it* ; to bring to light the hidden things of darkness. Sin goes under a disguise ; 'tis hard to know friends from enemies ; they had need have their senses about them, and well exercised too, that can discern betwixt good and evil, *Heb. 5. 14.* Who can understand his errors ? *Psal. 19. 12.* Sin lies in the dark. *The heart of man is desperately wicked, who can know it?* There's too much wickedness, and it lies too deep to be discerned by every eye ; he that means in earnest to cast out, must first search out his iniquities. *Let us search and try our ways, Lam. 4. 40.* He must *search the Scriptures* which describe these Enemies, and mark them out, what they are, and how many, and how you may know them, wherever you find them, and under what disguise soever they appear ; must *search the heart*, where if they walk no more openly, they will hide themselves, that they be not discovered or suspected.

Thou art a fool, a self deceiver, Sinner, who takest thy self to be an adversary to sin, and takest no care to find it out ; much more who willingly hidest it out of sight. He takes part with sin, which will not take pains to know it. *I hate the Devil and all his works, I repent, I forsake all my sin ; and though I have done iniquity, by the*
grace

grace of God, I will do so no more. Thus vain men talk, but dost know what thou sayest? what is sin? Dost know a friend from an enemy, good from evil? What are (*thy*) sins? What? What hast thou done? Wherein hast thou transgressed? what are they that have done thee mischief? what are their names; May be thou wilt say, their name is *Legion*, for they are many.

In many things I have transgressed, in many things I have offended, but in what things? Dost know thine enemy when thou seest him? Or wouldst thou know him if thou couldest? Dost thou make any search or inquiry after him? When thou readeest of a *proud heart* in the Scriptures, art able to say, *there's one of them* that have done me mischief? Or of a *covetous heart*, there's another of them; or of an *envious, malicious, froward heart*, there are more of them; of an *hard and hypocritical, ignorant, unbelieving heart*, *this is he*, this is my great enemy; Or if thou canst not tell, dost ask, Is not this he? Are not these they? O that I could understand mine errors, Lord make me to know my transgressions.

Sinners, never make your selves believe you are enemies to sin, till you make narrow and particular enquiry after it; after all sin, the several kindes of it, whether of omission, or commission, whether outward or spiritual, open or secret, greater or smaller, sins of ignorance or knowledge, of infirmities or presumption; your beloved, your most pleasing sins, your most gainful sins, whatever they be, you can never renounce, till you resolve to make a diligent search after them.

2. *To use all Gods means to destroy and overcome them*
He that hides his Enemy, and he that will spare him when he hath found him, is not an Enemy but a friend. He that sayes, I will destroy, and will
not

not use his weapons, either knows not what he sayes, or sayes what he never meanes. Thou sayest thou wilt renounce and resist all thy sins, but art thou in earnest ? What course dost mean to take ? wilt thou take Gods way ? He bids thee hear, beleive, pray, fast, mourn, strive, watch, &c. Wilt thou hearken to his Counsels ? Wilt thou be healed of thy diseases ? But wilt thou take the counsel of the Physitian ? Wilt thou use his Medicines ? Thou wilt overcome thine enemy, but wilt thou take heed of him ? Wilt thou fight against him ? Wilt thou take in all the help that's offered thee ? Wilt thou not only beleive, and lean upon God for his help, but wilt thou pray, and lift up thy heart for his help ? wilt not only pray against thy sins, but watch against them, against the occasions, temptations and beginnings of sin ? Wilt thou use (all) Gods means, and against (all) thy sins ? Shall not thine eyes spare any of them ? Wilt thou make thorough work with them, root and branch, old and young ? Shall there be neither the *lowing of the Oxen*, nor the *bleating of the Sheep* heard with thee ? wilt thou destroy the greater, and dash the little one also against the stone.

Wilt thou avenge thy self of thy adversaries, and wilt thou never again agree with thine adversaries ? wilt thou never again say, *is it peace*, Jehu ? *is it peace* Jezabel ? So if thy sins say to thee, *is it peace*, soul ? Wilt thou answer, *What have you to do with peace ? get you behind me*. Wilt thou neither make a Truce with sin, nor imbrace a parly, nor entertain a treaty for peace with it ? wilt thou not draw back thine hand, nor put up thy weapons, nor give over thy watch, nor go off thy Guard, till all thine Enemies become thy footstool ; all this is included in the renouncing of sin.

Beware you be not mistaken here, this is the damnation of the world, their mistakes about repentance. They

easily say *I repent of my sins, I forsake the Devil and all his works* ; and they as easily perswade themselves that they do as they say ; but did they understand what there is in this repentance, a searching out their sins, dividing their souls from them; a painful and watchful shunning and resisting them in their whole course ; did they know what their particular sins are, how near they are to their hearts, how they have been nursed in their bosoms, and how hard 'twill be now to part; even this Covetousness must go, even this sensuality must go, these dear pleasures, these beloved gains, these pleasant companions must all be sent away, not one to be spared, not so much as once more; did they understand this, they would then see what wind all their good words be. They as much mean to pluck their eyes out of their heads, to tear their flesh off their bones, as to repent, if this be repentance. Well now say, Wilt thou repent ? Wilt thou now renounce sin ?

Wilt thou renounce *the world* also; By the world understand all the *substance* of the world, Houses, Lands, Money, and whatsoever worldly Possessions ; all the *shadows* of the world, its Honours, Pleasures, Poms, with all its glory ; *the men of this world*, the friendship of the world, all fleshly Relations, Fathers, Mothers Brothers, Sisters, Children ; all sinful companions and Societies, whatsoever is in, and of the world.

These are then renounced, when we are resolved that they shall neither be

Our Gods or Idols.

Our Devils or Tempters.

1. *Not our Gods*. Then we make the world a God to us, when we make it our *happiness*, or end, when we bless our selves in it, and count that our very life consists in the abundance of the things which we possess, When we devote our selves to it, making it as the *blessedness*, so the

the great *business* of our life. He that can want the world, and yet be blessed ; he that can want, or have the world, and yet not serve it ; he hath renounced it even whilst he hath it, though 'tis his still, yet 'tis not his God.

2. Not our *Devils or Tempters*. The world tempts in a double way :

1. *Per modum Objecti* : as Objects, which by something that is apprehended desirable in them, entices and invites out the heart after them ; or by something apprehended as formidable, affrights us out of our way. Thus Pleasant meats tempts the Glutton, and wine the Drunkard, and a Lyon in the streets the Coward.

2. *Per modum cause Instrumentalis* ; as under Devils, or the Devils instruments, or Agitators, by which he betrays and beguiles unstable souls : In the former sence the *things of the world*, in the latter, the *men of the world*, are temptations and tempters to us. He renounces the world, that will not be tempted by the world ; that takes up with Christ, and will not be brib'd off by worldly advantages, nor proselyted by worldly companions.

He that is resolved for Christ, though with the loss of all, and with the displeasure of all the world ; He that can be poor for Christ, that can be vile for Christ, that can go hungry and naked with Christ, that can go alone with Christ, and that even then, when 'tis but turning away from Christ, and may be rich, and honourable, and be cloathed, & be filled, and have company enough, as much as he desires, he forsakes the world.

He that (*can*) renounce the world, when-ever it comes to be a case, either Christ must be forsaken, or all things for Christ ; he that (*can*) whose heart is brought to it, he (*hath*) renounced the world. What sayest thou now
Soul ?
Thou

Thou wilt have Christ, but what if thou must leave all behind thee? What if he say to thee, *Sell all thou hast and follow me*? Canst thou be poor? Canst thou be naked? Canst thou be hungry for Christ? Thou wilt have Christ, but how wilt thou leave thy Companions? What will all thy carnal friends say of thee? *He's a fool he's mad, he's besides himself*; How wilt thou look thy Father, or thy Mother, or thy wife in the face, who are all against it? who will be perswading, beseeching thee, weeping over thee, hanging upon thy neck; or it may be, scoffing and reviling, and spitting in thy face, to discourage and hold thee back. What sayest thou? Art thou yet for Christ? wilt thou forsake them all, cast off all that stands in thy way.

Wilt thou *forsake the Devil* also? But I need not now ask thee that, that's done already, farewell Devil, when once sin and the world are cast out. If thou wilt not be tempted to sin, if the world ceases to be a temptation, the Devil were as good cease to be a tempter. There be many that say, I despise the Devil, and yet despise not sin and the world; wise men! They like not the Devil, but yet will lick up his Excrements; they hate the Devil, and yet are never well longer then they are dancing in his Chains. Despise the Devil and yet love sin? Such defiance is his delight. Let sin be despised, let the world be despised, and the Devil is conquered.

4 And lastly, *Wilt thou cleave unto Christ from henceforth unto death*?

Thou wilt have Christ, but when? Shall this be the Marriage-day? Wilt thou from henceforth be the Lords? Or when shall it be? Must it be to morrow first, or next Moneth, or next year, or some time or other thou knowest not when? May we not take thy promise as they did the Prophecie, *Ezek. Is it not for*

for many dayes to come? is it not of the times that are afar off. To morrow thou wilt, hereafter thou wilt as good as thou hadst said nothing. As good thou hadst said (*never*) as (*not yet*) Speak soul, wilt thou give thy self to the Lord? wilt presently? if thou wilt, how long wilt thou abide with him? wilt thou not endorse on thy Deed of Gift, a power of revocation? wilt thou not repent, not return again from heaven to earth? wilt be chaste, and play the Harlot no more? wilt be faithful to the death, obedient to the death? Is this thy voice, *I have opened mouth to the Lord, and I cannot go back?* As the Lord I vowe, nothing but death, no not death it self, shall part thee and me, *I am perswaded, I am resolved, that neither Life nor Death, Angels nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other Creature shall separate me from the love of God or withdraw me from Jesus Christ my Lord.*

Now soul, gather up all this together, stand thou before the Lord the God of all the earth, and this once more say; *wilt thou have Jesus Christ for thy Husband?* Dost thou chuse him for thy Lord? Wilt thou cleave to him in love? Wilt thou lean upon him for righteousness and strength? For righteousness to pay thy debts, for strength to pay thy vows? Wilt thou be subject to him? Thou knowest the Commandments, how holy, how strict they be, Wilt thou obey them in all things? wilt exercise thy self to Godliness in the strictness of it? wilt be a thorow-paced Disciple? wilt not content thy self with such a cold or luke-warm indifferency in Religion, as thy lazy flesh will bear, as thy credit, thy safety, or the temper of the times will bear? wilt follow thy Lord fully? *wilt take up thy lot with Christ, be it better or worse?* Shall his Father be thy Father, his Inheritance be thy Inheritance? yea, and his sufferings thy sufferings? his stripes,

his

his bonds, his poverty be thine? Wilt thou espouse not his crown only, but his cross too? whither ever he goes, wilt thou go? where he dwells, wilt thou dwell? wilt say, where ever my Lord is, there let his Servant be? *Wilt thou forsake all others? all thy sins? wilt thou be made clean? wilt give up thy sores, and thy ulcers, thy filthy & fleshly lusts to be purged out? does thine heart stand disengaged from every sin? is there not any one iniquity, concerning which thine heart sayes, Let this stay with me? wilt search out thy sins? wilt accomplish a diligent search, sweep every corner, search every chamber of thine heart and life? wilt go down to the bottome of thy great deep, to find out what lodges there? wilt faithfully endeavour no more to allow thy self in any known iniquity? wilt use all Gods means for the conquering & casting them out? Wilt forsake the world? wilt cast away thine Idols? shall thy Mammon be no more a God, nor a demi-God to thee? shall it neither carry away thine heart from him, nor so much as share with him in it? wilt thou not bow down to this Golden Image, nor serve it? Wilt thou no longer serve thy greedy appetite? Shall thy heart no longer go after thy covetousness? wilt thou abandon thine estate, thy pleasures, thine honours, thy friends and companions, so far forth as any of these divide or entice, or steal away thine heart from thy Lord? whenever they say, come away, wilt thou say, get you hence? wilt thou forsake the Devil? wilt fear, and flie from, and no longer hearken to his temptations? wilt no longer regard his promises nor his threatnings? his flatteries nor his frowns? Coming off from the tents of all these, Wilt cleave unto the Lord from henceforth, from this day forward, and not depart from him for ever? Wilt hold on thy course; wilt run out thy race, wilt be faithful to the death, wilt hope to the end for the Grace that shall be brought*

brought unto thee at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

What sayest thou? if thou sayest (*No*;) as the Lord liveth, thou speakest this word against thine own life. If thou refusest to enter into this Covenant, thou sayest, I will not be the Lords, I will none of him, I will not live; let death, and wrath, and chains, and plagues be my portion for ever. I will not be the Lords, I will not leave my sins, and my pleasures, and my companions, for his love; that is, I will be a Fool, and a Beast, and a Devil; I will dye, and will not see life. Mistake not thy self, be not deceived, 'tis a matter of life and death that is before thee. 'Tis whether Heaven or Hell, as God or no God, a Christ or no Christ, a soul or a lost soul, everlasting life, or everlasting fire shall be thy portion, that stands now to be determined, by thy consent or refusal; look to it, bewise this once, for eternity. Consent and thou art blessed; consent, and he is thine, and with him the Kingdom. Thy Lord hath given his consent already, view the hand-writing, the whole New Testament, which is written in blood, and sealed, as 'tis written: There thou hast his (*I will*) in every line almost, visible before thee, put to thine hand, and 'tis done. What sayest thou? Dost thou consent? Shall thine heart come in, and put to thine hand, and subscribe for thee.

I will.

Let that be done, and then say after me,

*A Form of words expressing mans Covenanting
with God.*

O Most dreadful God, for the passion of thy Son, I beseech thee accept of thy poor Prodigall now prostrating himself at thy door: I have fallen from thee by mine iniquity, and am by nature a Son of death, and a thousand-fold more the Child of Hell by my wicked

wicked practice? but of thine Infinite Grace thou hast promised mercy to me: in Christ, if I will but turn to thee with all my heart: Therefore upon the Call of thy Gospel, I am now come in, and throwing down my weapons, submit my self to thy mercy.

The terms of our Conversion are either from which, or to which.

And because thou requirest, as the condition of my Peace with thee, that I should put away mine Idolls, and be at defiance with all thine enemies, which I acknowledge I have wickedly sided with against thee, I here from the bottom of my heart renounce them all, firmly Covenanting with thee, not to allow my self in any known sin, but Conscientiously to use all means that I know thou hast prescribed, for the death and utter destruction of all my corruptions. And whereas I have formerly inordinately and Idolatrously let out my affections upon the world, I do here resign my heart to thee that madest it, humbly protesting before thy Glorious Majesty, that it is the firm resolution of my heart, and that I do unfeignedly desire grace from thee, that when thou shalt call me hereunto, I may practice this my resolution, through thy assistance, to forsake all that is dear unto me in this world, rather then to turn from thee to the wayes of sin, and that I will watch against all its temptations, whether of prosperity or adversity, lest they should with-draw my heart from thee, beseeching thee also to help me against the temptations of Satan, to whose wicked suggestions, I resolve, by thy grace, never to yield my self a servant. And because my *own Righteousness* is but *menstruous rags*, I renounce all confidence therein, and acknowledge that I am of my self a *hopeless, helpless, undone*

condition of

The Terms from which we must turn, are Sin, Satan, the World, and our own Righteousness, which must be thus renounced.

done creature, without righteousness.

And forasmuch as thou hast of thy bottomless mercy offered most graciously to me wretched sinner to be again my God through Christ, if I would accept of thee, I call Heaven and Earth to record this day, that I do here solemnly avouch thee for the Lord my God, and with all possible Veneration bowing the neck of my soul under the feet of thy most sacred Majesty, I do here take thee, the Lord *Jehovah*, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for my portion and chief good, and do give up *my self*, body and soul for *thy servant*, promising and vowing to serve thee in holiness and righteousness all the dayes of my life.

And since thou hast appointed the Lord Jesus Christ the only means of coming unto thee, I do here upon the bended knees of my Soul, accept of him as the only New and Living Way, by which sinners may have access to thee, and do here solemnly joyn my self in a Marriage-Covenant to him.

O blessed Jesus, I come to thee hungry and hardly bestead, poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked, a most loathsome polluted wretch, a guilty condemned Malefactor, unworthy for ever to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord, much more to be solemnly married to the King of Glory: But sith such is thy unparallel'd love, I do here with all my power accept thee, and do take thee for my Head and Husband, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, for all times, and conditions, to love, honour, and obey thee before all others, and this to the death. I embrace thee in all

The terms to which we must turn are either ultimate or mediate.

The ultimate is God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who must be thus accepted.

The mediate terms, are either Principal or less principal. The Principal is Christ the Mediator who must thus, be embraced.

thine offices: I renounce ~~mine~~ mine own unworthiness, and do here avow thee to be the Lord my righteousness, I renounce mine own wisdom, and do here take thee for mine only Guide, I renounce mine own will, and take thy will for my law.

And since thou hast told me, that I must suffer if I will reign, I do here Covenant with thee to take my lot, as it falls with thee, and by thy grace assisting to run all hazards with thee, verily supposing, that neither life nor death shall part between thee and me.

And because thou hast been pleased to give me thy holy Laws, as the rule of my life, and the way in which I should walk to thy Kingdom; I do here willingly put my Neck under thy Yoke, and set my shoulder to thy burden, and subscribing to all thy Laws, as holy, just, and good, I solemnly

The less Principles, are the Laws of Christ; which must be thus accepted.

take them as the rule of my words, thoughts and actions promising, that though my flesh contradict and rebel, yet I will endeavour to order and govern my whole life according to thy direction, and will not allow my self, in the neglect of any thing that I know to be my duty.

Only because through the frailty of my flesh, I am subject to many failings; I am bold humbly to protest, that unallowed miscarriages, contrary to the settled bent and resolution of my heart, shall not make void, this Covenant; for so thou hast said.

Now almighty God searcher of hearts, thou knowest that I make this Covenant with thee this day, without any known guile or reservation, beseeching thee, that if thou espieest any flaw or falshood therein, thou wouldst discover it to me, and help me to do it aright.

And now glory be to thee, O God the Father, whom I shall behold from this day forward, to look upon as my God and Father, That ever thou shouldst find

out

out such a way for the recovery of undone sinners, Glory be to thee O God the Son, who hast loved me, and washed me from my sins in thine own blood, and art now become my Saviour and Redeemer : Glory be to thee, O God the Holy Ghost, who by the finger of thine Almighty Power, hast turned about my heart from sin to God.

O dreadful *Jehovah*, the Lord God Omnipotent, Father, Son and Holy Ghost ; thou art now become my Covenant-Friend, and I through thine infinite grace, am become thy Covenant-Servant, *Amen*. So be it. And the Covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven.

CHAP. XX. and last

An Exhortation to the Saints.

Come ye people beloved, you that are highly favoured : the Lord is with you. Blessed are you amongst men and women. The lines are fallen to you in a pleasant place, yea, you have a goodly heritage. Come and enter upon your lot ; let your hearts be glad, and let your glory rejoyce, but that your joy may be full, hearken to these following counsels :

Make sure your interest in the Covenant.

Rejoyce not in that that's none of thine. Make sure, all lies upon this : Your life, and all the comforts and concernments of it, both your eternal safety hereafter, and your success in all the parts of your Christian course here, depend on your interest in the Covenant. What have you if Christ be not yours ? and what have you in Christ, if you be not in Covenant ? whence are your hopes, either of mercy at last, or of prospering in any thing at present, but from the Covenant of promise ?

And

And what have you thence, if your name be not in it ? Oh give not rest to your selves, till this be put out of doubt ; whatever duties you perform, whatever ease or hope you find hereupon, whatever transportation of affection you feel in your hearts, in the midst of all enquiry.

But am I in Covenant ? How shall I know that, you'll say ? Why make a strict and narrow enquiry, whether those special graces already mentioned, be wrought upon you. Common mercies, though even these be Covenant mercies to the Saints, yet will they not prove themselves so to be ; but special graces will be their own evidence. Things outward, fall alike to all ! *No man knows love or hatred by ought befalls him, Eccles. 9. 1.* Thou mayest be a Son or a Bastard, notwithstanding all that thou enjoyest or sufferest here ; but not one of the fore-mentioned graces, but is a child's portion, Gods mark upon the heart, to distinguish children from strangers. Prove that thou truly knowest the Lord, hast one heart, a tender heart, &c. and thou therein provest thy self to be a childe of Promise. Read over the descriptions that have been given of these graces ; observe diligently where the main difference lies betwixt common and special graces ; compare thine heart with it, and thereby thou mayest give a judgment of thy state. If it be yet questionable, whether it be sound or no, sit not down till thou hast obtained ; but having obtained,

2. *Keep your evidences clear.* Have you peace ; maintain it carefully. The hidden Manna will never breed worms by long keeping. Content not your selves that you once had peace ; 'twill be but a poor livelyhood you will get out of what's wasted and lost. Get you good evidence, that God is yours, and keep them by you till you have need of them no more : Grace is your best evidence, cherish and preserve it. Get a seeing eye,

eye, and keep your eye open; get a single heart, and let it not be again divided; get a tender heart, and keep it tender; let the love and fear of God be acted in holy Obedience. An Obedient, Gracious, Watchful, Active life, will keep Grace in heart; and flourishing grace will speak for it self and you. Look not that the Lord should so far countenance your declinings to a more fleshly careless state, as to smile upon you in such a state; God will not be an Abettor to sin. Count upon it, that your grace and peace, your duty and comfort will rise and fall together; suspect those comforts that accompany you into the Tents of wickedness, and forsake you not, when you forsake your God. Keep up your spirits, and then lift up your heads; keep heedfully on your way, and your joy shall no man take from you. Particularly,

1. Keep close to God.
2. Keep hold on Christ.
3. Keep touch with the Spirit.
4. Keep in with Conscience.

1. *Keep close to God.* Keep thy self under his eye and influences. Both thy grace and thy comforts as they had their birth, so must they have their nourishment from Heaven. Lose the sight of the Sun, and darkness follows. Let thine eyes be towards the hills. Let divine love be the pleasure of thy life. Let it be thy Lords Cord upon thine heart let it bind thee to him; he loves Captives, let thine ear be bor'd to the threshold; be familiar in Heaven, keep thine acquaintance there, and be at peace; chide back thy gadding heart. Soul, whither art thou going? Who hath the words of Eternal life? Let the interviews of love betwixt thy Lord and thee be constant; let them not be only on some few holy dayes of thy life.

Count not thou hast lived that day, in which thou hast not lived with God.

Keep close to God, *by keeping close to duty.* Keep close to duty, and keep close to God in duty. Call not that a duty? which thou canst not call *Communion with God.* Make not duty to do the work of sin, to take God out of sight. Let not Prayer, or Hearing, or Sacraments, be instead of a God to thee. Such praying, and hearing, there is amongst many, but know not thou any thing for Religion, wherein thou meetest not with God.

Behold the face of God, but *behold his face in righteousness, Psal. 17. 15.* 'Tis ill looking upon God with a blood-shot eye. Guilt upon the heart, will be a cloud that will make the Sun as darkness to thee, Walk in the light of the Lord. Walk in the light, as he is in the light. In thy light (the holiness of thy life) thou shalt see his light. The light of his holiness in thee, will be attended with the light of his countenance upon thee. By the light of his countenance, thou wilt both see thy self in thy way to thine hopes, and learn thy way more perfectly, *Psal. 119. 135. Make thy face to shine upon thy servant, and teach me thy statutes.* God hath many wayes of teaching; he teaches by Book, he teaches by his Finger, he teaches by his Rod; but his most comfortable and effectual teaching, is by the light of his eye. *Send forth thy light and thy truth, let them lead me, let them bring me to thy Holy Hill.*

2. *Keep hold on Christ.* He is thy peace. Appear not before God, but in the blood of the Lamb; let him carry up thy duties, and own not that for a comfort, which is not brought thee by his hand. Let him be thy way to the Father, and thy Fathers way to thee. Keep fresh upon thine heart, the memory of his death and satisfaction, and let that be thy life, and thine hope. Hast thou

thou cast Anchor on this Rock, lose not thy hold ; hang upon the horns of the Altar : Thou canst not live, but there ; if thou must dye, say, but *I will dye here.* Put forth fresh acts of faith every day and hour. Believe, beleive, beleive, and then thou shalt be established. Fall not into unbelief, then thou art gone ; thou departest from the living God, *Heb. 3. 12.*

3. Kept on with the spirit. Observe and obey his motions ; when he excites, get thee on ; when he checks, get thee back ; know the holy from the evil spirit, by its according or differing with the Scriptures ; reject that spirit in the heart, that is not the same with the spirit in the Word. Try the wind, what and whence it is, by the Card and Compass ; *To the Law, and to the Testimony.* And when thou perceivest it's from above ; hoist up thy sails, and get thee on. *Quench not the Spirit : Grieve not the holy spirit of God, whereby thou art sealed to the day of Redemption.*

4. Keep in with Conscience. Make not thy witness thine Enemy. Deal friendly with it ; thou wilt need its good word, which thou canst not have, if it receive blows from thee ; it will not learn this lesson, to *speake good for evil* : or if thou shouldest beat it into it, thou art undone ; if an abused conscience speak peace, it becomes thy Traytor.

Give due respect to Conscience. Let it abide with thee, in peace, and in power. Keep up its Authority, as Gods Vicegerent. Next under God *commit the keeping of thy soul* to conscience, as the Lord hath, so do thou make it *superintendent* in thy soul, the Judge and Overseer of all thy motions and actions. Let Conscience *counsel* thee, and tell thee thy way ; let Conscience quicken thee, and put thee on thy way ; let Conscience *watch* thee

thee that thou turn not out of thy way; let Conscience check thee, and reduce thee into thy way. Whither ever thou goest, carry Conscience along with thee, carry Conscience into thy Closet, let it watch thee, how thou behavest thy self there; carry Conscience into thy Shop, let it eye thee what thou dost there; carry Conscience into thy Fields, into the Market, amongst thy friends, amongst thine Enemies, let it observe how thou behavest thy self amongst them; carry Conscience with thee to thy Recreation, to thy Bed, to thy Table; whither ever thou goest, there's like to be but sad work, if Conscience be not with thee. *Commit the keeping of thy Covenant* to Conscience; let it be *the Ark* in which the Tables of the Testimony are kept and preserved; let it be *the Executer of thy Testament*; Conscience is bound by the Covenant, the Covenant layes hold on it, let it lay hold on thee. Is thy Conscience bound? Seek not to be loosed; Is thy Conscience bound? Give it leave to bind thine whole man: Let it bind thy thoughts, and bind thy will, and bind thy affections, and bind thy tongue, and thy whole practice; thou never livest as a man in Covenant, longer then thou livest as a man of Conscience. What becomes of the Covenant, when a breach is made upon Conscience? Oh what is there in the world when Conscience is not! What faith, or truth, or peace is there left alive? What are Vows, and Covenants, and Promises? What are our duties to the Lord, our dealings with men, when there is no Conscience towards God? Keep thy conscience and thou keepest thy soul; keep thy Conscience, and thou keepest thy Covenant; keep thy Covenant, and thou keepest thy Peace; let that go, and all's lost.

Let Conscience govern what God hath put under its power, and let it resist all adverse power. Let it resist temptations. When ever Satan, and thy flesh, fall upon thee and tempt thee, *pitty thy self, spare thy self, take thy liberty, take thine ease, take thy pleasure, provide for thy safety; what need is there of so much ado? why canst not take the same liberty, and allow thy self the same latitude as others do? They have souls as well as thou, and they have dangers as well as thou; and they have hopes as well as thou; and they have reasons and understandings to know what they do as well as thou; and why canst thou not be content to do as they?* Why, let this be thy answer, *But what Conscience is therefor it?* With what Conscience can I be idle, when I have said, I will be doing? with what Conscience can I take mine ease when I have said, I will take pains? with what Conscience can I serve my flesh, when I have said, I will crucifie it? With what Conscience can I love this world, when I have said, I will renounce it? With what Conscience can I walk at liberty, when I have said, I will walk circumspectly? If all this were *more than needs*, (far be it from me to have such a thought, till the serving my God, and the saving my soul, be more than needs.) But if it were *more than needs*, yet is it any *more than I am bound to*? Are there any such Liberties put into my Indentures? Was there any exception made of this duty, or that duty? Was there any limitation made, to this measure, or that measure; hitherto will I go, and no further; this little I will do, and no more? Was there any such *Proviso* put in, I will serve the Lord, provided I may with ease, or with safety? Have I not solemnly engaged to the Lord, to obey him in all things, to follow him fully, to love him, and serve him, with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my strength, and this to the death? And Oh shall I lye unto God? is it more than needs to be righte-

teous, and to keep my faith. Come, O my soul, come on; thou hast opened thy mouth to the Lord, and thou must not go back; Be true, be honest; be honest, though thou must swear for it; be honest, though thou suffer for it. Remember what thy mouth hath spoken, and see that thou fulfill it with thine hand.

Keep Conscience pure. Its the Book in which all thy Records are written, let no blot be upon thy Book. Beware of sinning against Conscience. Every sin against Conscience, is a blot upon Conscience. Every sin against Conscience, are blots upon thy Covenant-evidence; thou wilt not be able to read whether there be any thing written there for thee or not. Ah foolish soul, what art thou doing? Dashing out all thine hopes with thine own hand. Beware thou content not thy self with blot-ted Evidences.

Christians forget not this counsel, keep your Evidence clear. He who hath his whole estate in *Bonds or writings*, how charily will he keep them? If these be torn or lost, or so blurred, that they cannot be read, he's undone. Whatever else be lost, if his money be gone, if his goods be lost, if his house be burnt, yet if his writings be safe, he's well enough. Oh take heed and keep your writings safe and fair; keep your title to your God clear, and you can never be poor or miserable. Whatever earth or hell can do against you, till they can tear the Covenant of your God, or make you blot out your own names, they have left you abundantly enough, even when they have left you nothing.

O how highly we are concern'd to be tender of Conscience, and yet how little care is there taken of it! What's become of the Authority of Conscience, when thy thoughts, and thy passions, when thine eyes and thine ears, and thine appetite, and thy tongue, are left untidled and unconquered; when every servant is set up

to be Master, and bears rule in thee, where is thy Conscience? what's become of its Authority? when thy *soul hath been no better kept* (what poverty and leanness is there grown upon it, what a starveling is it become both in grace and peace, eaten out with lust, evaporated into vanity, sunk into sensuality, thy spirit even transubstantiated into flesh, ready to perish, and dye away for want of good looking to) when thy soul hath been no better kept, where is thy Conscience? when thy *Covenant hath been no better kept*, when thy duties thou hast vowed to perform, are so hastily and heedlessly shuffled over, if not totally thrust aside; when thy hours of prayer are such short hours, thy Sabbaths such winter dayes, so short and so cold too; when thy God is so shamefully neglected, can never hear of thee; but when thou hast nothing else to do, no not it may be then neither, when thy spare hours are hardly spared for God; when this earth, thy Corn, and thy Cattel, and thy Pleasures, and thy friends, which thou hast vowed to renounce, are let in again upon thine heart, and have stoln it away from Heaven, where is thy Conscience? when thou sleepest so, and hast let the Enemy come in and sow his tares in thy field when thou art such a busie body in other mens matters and thine own Vineyard thou hast not kept, but hast let it fallow, like the field of the sluggard, all overgrown with thornes and nettles; when both thine heart and thy house are so much out of order; when thy wife, and thy children and thy servants are left at randome, to do all, what's right in their own eyes; when more care is taken for the Asses, then for the Sons and the Daughters, when thy house is a very Hospital of blind, and lame, & sick souls, ready to dye for want of instruction and good discipline; where is thy Conscience? and if Conscience be not, where is thy Covenant? and if thy Covenant be not, oh where is thy God and thy peace?

Ah Conscience! where art thou become? what is become of that good thing committed to thee, yea, what is become of thee?

Ah soul; where is thy peace? how is the keeper of thy peace laid low, and the Covenant of thy peace broken? what peace whilst no Conscience, and what hast thou left, whilst no peace? Ah Lord! thy treacherous dealers, how treacherously have they dealt with thee? thy Children have forgotten thee, thy servants are Run-aways from thee; thou art our Father, but where is thine honour? thou art our Master, but where is thy fear? we are thy servants, but where is our faith? Ah Lord, we have dealt falsely in thy Covenant.

Return, O Lord, return; repair thy Watches, recover thine honours, reduce thy wanderers, restore Conscience, revive our peace, cause us to return, and renew our Covenant; and remember, break not thou thy Covenant with us.

Christians let us bewaile lost Conscience, and let it be recovered; let us weep over our dead; and let their souls return into them. Let those of us, that have obtained grace to be faithful, and watchful, and tender, rejoyce, and take heed: let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall. Go on in the Name of the Lord: Remember his counsels; keep close by God, keep hold on Christ, keep touch with the Spirit, keep in with Conscience; keep thine heart, keep thy garments, keep up thy watch, keep on thy way, finish thy course, keep the Faith; and then let the Devil do his worst, thy peace shall be extended to thee as a River, and established as a Rock, and thou shalt be able to say, in the words, and in the faith of the Apostle, *Hence forth is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness, which God the righteous Judge shall give unto me at that day, and not to me only, but to all that love his appearing.*

3. *Add to your Covenant, your Sacrifice*, Psal. 50. 5. *Gather my Saints together unto me, those that have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice.* God hath made with you, and he expects that you make a Covenant with him *by Sacrifice.*] Sacrifices were Seals for the Covenant. As Gods part of the Covenant, so our part also must be sealed, and sealed with blood; his with the blood of his Son, ours with the blood of our sins.

Rom. 12. 1. *I beseech you therefore, Brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies as a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God.* The Sacrificing of our selves to the Lord, comprehends in it three things.

Alienation.

Dedication.

Oblation.

1. *Alienation*, or the passing away of our selves from our selves. *You are not your own, you are bought with a price.* Thus he hath said, and he expects that we should say also, true Lord, I am not mine own.

2. *Dedication*, or the passing over our selves to the Lord. 2 Chron. 29. 35. *You have consecrated your selves to the Lord.* His we are by *purchase*, but he expects that we be his also by *donation*: his we are by *conquest*, but he expects we should be his by *consent* also. Though he may challenge us as his right, yet the most acceptable claim is, when he hath us by gift. When our hearts say, *I am thine Lord*; then his heart will answer, *Soul thou art mine.*

3. *Oblation*, or the actual surrender or offering up our selves to him. In the Offering this Sacrifice, is included the *Immolation*, or slaying of it: We must slay our selves (in a spiritual sense) be mortified, be crucified with Christ, and so offered up a Sacrifice to him. You will

will say, how is it then required, that we offer up our selves (*a living sacrifice*?)

Ans. We are never truly alive, till we are dead, Col. 3. 3. *Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.* When our flesh is dead our spirit is life, Rom. 8. As the Apostle; 1. Cor. 15. *That which thou sowest, so that which thou sacrificest, is not quickned, except it dye. Mortificatio est mors viva.* Alapid. 'Tis only the mortified Christian that is a living sacrifice.

Christians, come and sacrifice your selves to the Lord, come and slay your sacrifices, and so offer them up. Your sacrifice is then slain (as before 'tis intimated) when your carnal self, your *old man is crucified with Christ, and the body of sin destroyed*, Rom. 6. When *the wisdom of the flesh is crucified*, and made to vanish before the wisdom of God; when the *will of the flesh is subdued*, and swallowed up of the will of God; when *the lusts of the flesh are vanquished*, and made captives by the Law of God.

Christians, It may be you are willing to make your claim to the Covenant of God, but have you made Covenant with him? You have entred into Covenant with God, but will you confirm your Covenant by sacrifice? You will give your selves a sacrifice to the Lord, but is your sacrifice slain? Is the wisdom of the flesh made foolishness? How is it with your carnal wills? Is the will of the flesh broken, and brought into subjection, yielding it self up to the Lord? O for an exinanition of wills, and emptying them into the will of God! What wilt thou do? What wilt thou have? Nothing but what God will. What the Lord would have me to do, or avoid, or suffer, I can no longer say him nay. Is this the will of God, my Sanctification? So 'tis mine. Is this the will of God, my humiliation? So 'tis mine. Is this the will of God, my tribulation? So 'tis mine. Is God for Holiness? through Grace so am I. Is God for his own will?

will? so am I. This is all the will I have, that the Lord may have his will of me, may be all to me, have all from me, rule all in me, and dispose of all that concerns me.

How is it with your carnal affections, and fleshly lusts? are these slain? Is your covetousness, your sensuality, your pride and envy; are your carnal joyes, and fears; and worldly sorrows, are these destroyed; those wild-fires of passion, and fury, and rage; are these quenched? Come put the knife to the throat of all these, and then there's a sacrifice for God. Go and offer it up, and let it be

A Free-will Offering.
A Thank-Offering.

1. *A Free-will Offering.* Offering up your selves willingly to the Lord, *Psal. 110. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.* O may that glorious day dawn upon us! God loves a chearful giver, offer up your hearts, with all your heart; grudge not that the Lord requires, but bless God, that he will accept of an Offering; this hath a comfortable signification: If the Lord hath meant to destroy us, he would not have accepted an Offering at our hands, *Judg. 13. 23.*

2. *A Thank-Offering.* Offer unto God Thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most high. Offer up *your selves* in token of your thankfulness to the Lord. Beye both the Priests, and the Lambs for the sacrifice. Present your selves to the Lord, as the accomplishments of his Covenant, as the fruits of the death of your Redeemer, as the Trophies of his Victory, as the spoils which he hath recovered from Death and Hell, making a shew of them openly, that it may be seen, that the promise of God is not of none effect, and that Christ

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did not die in vain. Let your Lord Jesus, when he comes down into his Garden, where he left his Blood, reap his pleasant fruits, and carry up your purified souls, as the signals of his glorious achievement. Offer up your sins to the Lord; these unclean Beasts will be an acceptable Sacrifice. There's more real honour growing up to the Lord, from one mortified Saint, than from ten thousand Anthems from the most Seraphick Tongues. Offer up *your duties* to the Lord; your obedience for a Sacrifice. *To obey is better then Sacrifice*; than thousands of Rams, and ten thousands of Rivers of Oyl. Let your whole life be this Sacrifice: let every day be a Sabbath, every duty an Eucharist, every member a Cymbal, sounding out the praises of God. Offer up *the calves of your lips* unto the Lord. O let your souls be filled with wonder, and your mouths with praise. *Whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?* Oh whence is this to us, that the Lord our Father should come, and come so near to us! Oh whence is it, that the mighty God should indent, and come into Bond with sinful man! That he who was free from all men, should make himself debtor to any! That the high and lofty One, that inhabits eternity, should dwell in houses of clay, and pitch his Tabernacle in the dust! that he *who humbleth himself to behold the Heavens*, should come down into the Earth; and after what is he come down, but after a dead Dog, or a Flea; That he should make a league with the stones of the ground, with the beasts of the Field, and creeping things? Should Espouse dust and ashes, & gather up vile worms into his bosome? Should set his heart upon shadows, and adopt the refuse of the Earth for Sons and Daughters to himself? Should raise the poor out of the dust, and the beggar from the dunghill? Should do such great things, & should chuse the foolish, and the weak, and the base, and the contemptible, and

and bestow on (*them*) amongst all the world, these high honours? Should make them the Head, and the Honourable, whom the world hath made the tail, the filth, and the off-scouring of all things? Should give himself to be the portion, his Son to be the ransom, his Kingdome to be the heritage of Bankrupts, Prisoners, and Captives? *Lord, what is man, that thou art thus mindful of him! Soul what is God, that thou shouldest be yet unmindful of him? How is it, that the tongue of the dumb is not yet loosned, that the feet of the lame do not leap as an Hart?*

O what is the love, whence this strange thing hath broken forth? This, this is the womb that bare thee hence hath thy righteousness sprung forth; hence have thy dignities, thy astonishing hopes, and joyes arisen to thee; this is it that yearned upon thee in thy misery that reprieved thee from death, redeemed thee from darkness, rescued thee as a brand out of the burning; that pittied thee in thy blood, washed thee from thy blood, spared thee, pardoned thee, reconciled thee, and brought thee, an Enemy, a Rebel, a Traitor, into a Covenant of peace with the God of Glory. Ah contemptible dust! that ever there should be such compassionate contrivements, and such astonishing condescension of the Eternal Deity, towards so vile a thing! O love the Lord all ye his Saints! O bless the Lord, ye beloved, ye people near unto the Lord. Alas, that our hearts should be so narrow, that the waters should be so shallow with us: where are our eyes, if we be not yet filled with wonders? What hearts have we, if we have not yet filled our lips with praise? Open all thy Springs, O my soul, let them flow forth in streams of love and joy; let every faculty be tuned and strained to the height; let heart, and hands, and tongue and eyes lift up their voice; be astonished O Heavens, be moved
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ye strong foundations of the earth, fall down ye Elders; strike up ye heavenly Quires, lend poor Mortals your Notes, to sing forth the high praises of God, who rideth on the Heavens, and hath caused us to ride on the high places of the earth, and made us to sit together in heavenly places; shewing forth the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Awake up my glory, awake Psaltrey and Harp, I my self will awake right early; my soul doth magnifie the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoyced in God my Saviour; for he that is mighty hath done for me great things, and holy is his Name. Blessed be the Lord God of *Israel*, who hath visited and redeemed his people, who hath raised up an Horn of Salvation for us, in the house of his servant *David*, who hath laid help on one who is Mighty, and exalted one chosen among the people, and hath given him for a Covenant to them. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name, who hath redeemed thy life from death, and crowned thee with loving kindness and tender mercies. Salvation to our God, that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches; and wisdom, and strength, and glory, and honour, and blessing; for thou livest, and wast dead, and art alive for evermore. Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation: and hast made us Kings and Priests unto our God for ever. *Hallelujah, Hallelujah.*

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